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Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions Report

First report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

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Contents

Chapter		*Page*
	Preface	6
I.	General comments, observations and recommendations	8
	A. Budget methodology, format and presentation	14
	B. Proposed level of resources	18
	C. Posts and personnel matters	26
	D. Non-post objects of expenditure	30
	E. Cost recovery practices	33
	F. Extrabudgetary resources	34
	G. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies	35
	H. Conclusion	35
II.	Detailed recommendations on the proposed programme budget	36
	Estimates of expenditure	36
	Part I **Overall policymaking, direction and coordination**	36
	Section 1. Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	36
	Section 2. General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management	46
	Part II **Political affairs**	55
	Section 3. Political affairs	55
	Section 4. Disarmament	58
	Section 5. Peacekeeping operations	62
	Section 6. Peaceful uses of outer space	66
	Part III **International justice and law**	69
	Section 7. International Court of Justice	69
	Section 8. Legal affairs	75
	Part IV* **International cooperation for development**	80
	Section 9. Economic and social affairs	80
	Section 10. Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	85

* Section 13, International Trade Centre, will be considered separately (see para. 20).

Section 11. United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development . 87
Section 12. Trade and development 90
Section 14. Environment 94
Section 15. Human settlements 97
Section 16. International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice 100
Section 17. UN-Women 105

Part V
Regional cooperation for development 108
Section 18. Economic and social development in Africa 111
Section 18A. Regional commission 111
Section 18B. Regional Commissions New York Office 119
Section 19. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific 120
Section 20. Economic development in Europe 127
Section 21. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean 131
Section 22. Economic and social development in Western Asia 135
Section 23. Regular programme of technical cooperation 140

Part VI
Human rights and humanitarian affairs 143
Section 24. Human rights 143
Section 25. International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees 149
Section 26. Palestine refugees 152
Section 27. Humanitarian assistance 155

Part VII
Public information 159
Section 28. Public information 159

Part VIII
Common support services 165
Section 29. Management and support services 165
Section 29A. Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management 168
Section 29B. Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts 171
Section 29C. Office of Human Resources Management 174
Section 29D. Office of Central Support Services 178
Section 29E. Office of Information and Communications Technology 185
Section 29F. Administration, Geneva 190
Section 29G. Administration, Vienna 194
Section 29H. Administration, Nairobi 197

Part IX
Internal oversight 201

Section 30. Internal oversight 201

Part X
Jointly financed administrative activities and special expenses 208

Section 31. Jointly financed administrative activities 208

International Civil Service Commission 209

Joint Inspection Unit 210

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, including the International Public Sector Accounting Standards project 211

Section 32. Special expenses 213

Part XI
Capital expenditures 217

Section 33. Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance 217

Part XII
Safety and security 226

Section 34. Safety and security 226

Part XIII
Development Account 232

Section 35. Development Account 232

Part XIV
Staff assessment 234

Section 36. Staff assessment 234

Estimates of income 234

Income section 1. Income from staff assessment 234

Income section 2. General income 235

Income section 3. Services to the public 237

Annexes

I. Proposed regular budget established and temporary posts by part of the programme budget 245

II. Summary of proposed changes in established and temporary posts by section of the programme budget 247

III. Other staff costs by section of the programme budget (before recosting) 260

IV. Standard round-trip airfare rates to/from New York used in the formulation of the proposed programme budget 262

V. Compliance with the advance air ticket purchase policy 265

VI. Other documents of United Nations entities considered by the Advisory Committee 268

VII. Share of participating organizations and corresponding amounts in the budgets of jointly financed bodies 272

Preface

1. The major functions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as defined by the General Assembly in its resolution 14 (I) of 13 February 1946, are:

(a) To examine and report on the budget submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly;

(b) To advise the General Assembly concerning any administrative and budgetary matters referred to it;

(c) To examine on behalf of the General Assembly the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and proposals for financial arrangements with such agencies;

(d) To consider and report to the General Assembly on the auditors' reports on the accounts of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.

The Advisory Committee also reports on the financing of peacekeeping operations, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. In addition, the Committee reports on administrative budgets and other matters to the governing bodies of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (voluntary funds), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (Environment Fund), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations University (UNU), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

2. Under rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the members of the Advisory Committee, no two of whom shall be nationals of the same State, shall be selected on the basis of broad geographical representation, personal qualifications and experience.

3. The Advisory Committee, as at 7 August 2017, had the following membership:

Carlos Ruiz Massieu (Chair)
Babou Sene (Vice-Chair)
Takeshi Akamatsu
Pavel Chernikov
Ihor Humennyi
Conrod Hunte
Mutaz Hyassat
Marcel Jullier
Mahesh Kumar
Ali A. Ali Kurer
Dietrich Lingenthal
Olivier Myard
Fernando de Oliveira Sena
Tesfa Alem Seyoum
David Traystman
Ye Xuenong

4. The present report contains the conclusions and recommendations arrived at by the Advisory Committee on the basis of the Secretary-General's proposals for the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, supplemented, to the extent possible, by additional information supplied orally or in writing by representatives of the Secretary-General.

(*Signed*) Carlos G. **Ruiz Massieu**
Chair

Chapter I
General comments, observations and recommendations

1. During its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019,[1] the Advisory Committee met with the Secretary-General and his representatives in hearings that took place during the period from 22 May to 12 July 2017. The Secretariat also provided additional information and clarification on all sections of the budget, concluding with written responses received on 2 August 2017.

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in paragraph 7 of its resolution 71/274, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to prepare his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 on the basis of a preliminary estimate of $5,395.0 million at revised 2016-2017 rates, inclusive of a provision of $1,124.4 million for special political missions. In paragraph 8 of the resolution, the Assembly decided that the proposed programme budget would contain provisions for recosting on the basis of the existing methodology.

3. In paragraphs 9 and 10 of the same resolution, the General Assembly also decided on the priorities for the biennium 2018-2019 and requested the Secretary-General to reflect them when presenting his proposed programme budget for that period. The priorities are as follows:

(a) Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences;

(b) Maintenance of international peace and security;

(c) Development of Africa;

(d) Promotion of human rights;

(e) Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts;

(f) Promotion of justice and international law;

(g) Disarmament;

(h) Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

4. The General Assembly also stressed that the budget outline is a preliminary estimate of resources and reaffirmed that the budget proposals of the Secretary-General should reflect resource levels commensurate with mandates for their full, efficient and effective implementation (ibid., paras. 5 and 6).

5. Finally, the General Assembly decided that the level of the contingency fund for the biennium 2018-2019 would be set at 0.75 per cent of the preliminary

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Note: The following abbreviations relating to posts have been used in the present report: DSG, Deputy Secretary-General; ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS, General Service; GTA, general temporary assistance; LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; OL, Other level; PL, Principal level; SS, Security Service; TC, Trades and Crafts; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

[1] A/72/6 (Introduction and Corr.1) (Sects. 1-3), (Sect. 4 and Corr.1), (Sect. 5 and Corr.1), (Sect. 6), (Sect. 7 and Corr.1), (Sect. 8 and Corr.1), (Sects. 9-11), (Sect. 12 and Corr.1), (Sects. 14-23), (Sect. 24 and Corr.1), (Sect. 25), (Sect. 26 and Corr.1), (Sects. 27 and 28), (Sects. 29A and 29B), (Sect. 29C and Corr. 1 and 2), (Sects. 29D-29H), (Sects. 30-32), (Sect. 33 and Corr.1), (Sects. 34-36) and (Income sects. 1-3).

estimate, namely at $40.46 million, and that the fund would be used in accordance with the procedures established for its use and operation (ibid., para. 11).

6. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 has been prepared in accordance with the framework of the approved biennial programme plan and priorities for 2018-2019, as set out in General Assembly resolution 71/6 (A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 1).

Overview of resources

7. The Secretary-General proposes a programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 under the expenditure sections amounting to $5,405.05 million before recosting, reflecting an increase of $10 million, or 0.2 per cent, as compared with the preliminary estimate established in the approved budget outline for 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 15). The Secretary-General indicates that the increase of $10 million is due mainly to: (a) the inclusion of unforeseen requirements relating to the strengthening of the International Court of Justice ($2.8 million); and (b) the estimates for the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic in line with General Assembly resolution 71/272 B ($7.6 million). It should be noted that all references to budgetary resources in the present report are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e. before recosting), unless specifically identified as being at preliminary 2018-2019 rates.

8. Estimates of income for the biennium 2018-2019, including income from staff assessment, amount to $554.1 million, compared with estimates of $539.2 million for 2016-2017, reflecting an increase of $14.9 million, or 2.8 per cent (ibid., para. 16). General income and income from services to the public are also included in those estimates, amounting to $48.4 million.

9. In table 1 below, the proposed resource requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 are compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolutions from the main and first part of the resumed seventieth session, and with the final expenditure for 2014-2015. When compared with the revised appropriation of $5,620.2 million approved for the biennium 2016-2017, the proposal reflects a net reduction of $215.2 million, or 3.8 per cent (ibid., paras. 1 and 15).

10. The Secretary-General indicates that the budget proposals for 2018-2019 will allow the Organization to fully and effectively implement its mandates (ibid., para. 15).

11. After the inclusion of preliminary recosting figures, the proposed budget level of $5,532.6 million reflects a decrease of $87.6 million, or 1.5 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017 (ibid., para. 42). The proposed budget level is also $155.9 million, or 2.7 per cent, lower than the total actual final expenditure for 2014-2015.

Table 1
Comparison of resource requirements for the bienniums 2014-2015, 2016-2017 and 2018-2019

(Rounded figures, in millions of United States dollars)

Expenditure for 2014-2015	5 688.5
Revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (resolutions 71/272 B and 71/280)	5 620.2
Approved outline for 2018-2019	5 395.0
Proposed for 2018-2019 (before recosting)	5 405.1
Proposed for 2018-2019 (after preliminary recosting)	5 532.6

12. The established methodology for the preparation of the budget is set out in General Assembly resolution 47/212 A, the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (ST/SGB/2013/4) and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2016/6). Under this methodology, the revised appropriations for the current biennium are used as the basis against which resource changes are calculated and resources are requested for the new biennium. Table 2 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget shows that, in accordance with this methodology, the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017 ($5,620.2 million) formed the basis for the budget proposal for 2018-2019.

13. The Secretary-General indicates that his proposal includes: (a) a net reduction of $231.7 million attributed to one-time costs in the biennium 2016-2017 of $245.2 million that would not be required for 2018-2019 and technical adjustments of $2.8 million, which reflects mainly a lower Secretariat share of the cost of the United Nations security management system, offset in part by additional requirements of $16.3 million for the biennial provision of resources for 104 new posts established in 2016 and 2017; (b) an increase of $79.4 million in new and expanded mandates (see also para. 15 below); (c) changes within and/or across budget sections that reflect a net reduction of $4 million, reflecting reorganization efforts in several departments; and (d) "other changes" amounting to a net reduction of $58.9 million, which the Secretary-General attributes to efficiencies, offset in part by increased resource requirements in support of a number of initiatives (see also paras. 61-75 below).

14. The net effects of the proposed changes described above, broken down by budget part, are set out in table 2 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget. Resource changes, by each of the four contributing factors, are represented graphically in figure X of the same document.

15. Further discussion on the categorization and presentation of these adjustments and on the proposed level of resources are reflected below in sections A and B below, respectively. The Advisory Committee's detailed observations and recommendations on the resources proposed in respect of new or expanded mandates are contained in the related sections in chapter II of the present report.

16. The Secretary-General also states that resources in the amount of $1,109.6 million are included for special political missions under section 3 of his budget proposal. Detailed proposals for special political missions for 2018 and 2019 will be presented to the General Assembly in the final quarter of 2017 and 2018, respectively (ibid., para. 17). A subsequent reduction of $14.8 million, included in the $58.9 million "other changes" referred to in paragraph 13 above, has been reflected in the preliminary estimates for special political missions (ibid., para. 33). Further discussion on the estimates for special political missions are contained in paragraphs 55-57 below.

17. In his introduction, the Secretary-General includes charts depicting the distribution of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 across the eight priority areas approved by the General Assembly, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination's programmatic themes and the parts of the programme budget and by budget part, budget section and budget line (ibid., figures II and III). In terms of the overall trends in the approved funding for the regular budget and related expenditure in past periods, the Advisory Committee was provided with the details upon request, which are reflected in table 2 below.

Table 2
Trends in regular budget approved funding and related expenditures from 2006-2007 to 2014-2015

(United States dollars)

	Regular budget	
Biennium	*Final appropriation*	*Expenditure*
2006-2007	4 193 772 400	4 146 278 000
2008-2009	4 799 914 500	4 749 421 000
2010-2011	5 416 433 700	5 414 152 000
2012-2013	5 565 067 800	5 524 829 000
2014-2015	5 808 565 500	5 688 535 000

18. For the biennium 2018-2019, a total staffing level of 9,998 posts is proposed, representing a net decrease of 92 posts compared with the approved staffing level for 2016-2017. This proposal reflects the abolishment of 175 posts, offset in part by the establishment of 79 new posts and the conversion of 4 posts from general temporary assistance (ibid., para. 46 and tables 5-7). Further details on posts and personnel matters are contained in section C below.

Reform proposals and additional reports to be submitted to the General Assembly

19. In the Foreword to his proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General indicates that the proposal did not yet reflect his reform proposals and vision for the Organization, given the timelines for budget preparation and submission and the fact that the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 is the first budget proposal of his term as Secretary-General. He indicates that at the time of the issuance of the budget proposal, several reform tracks had also been launched. The Secretary-General informed the Advisory Committee that he had established three strategic priorities for reform: in the Organization's work for peace; in its support for sustainable development; and in its internal management. He outlined a road map for those efforts in a letter to Member States dated 3 May 2017 and indicated that his reform proposals would be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session. Any related adjustments to the budget proposal would be submitted as revised estimates (ibid., para. 21).

20. The Secretary-General indicates that there are a number of other proposals that were not included in the proposed programme budget that will have an impact on the budget level, including requirements relating to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;[2] the global service delivery model; and estimates for the administration of justice, ongoing and additional construction projects at offices away from Headquarters, including the strategic heritage plan in Geneva, and enhanced maintenance of premises across the Secretariat (ibid., paras. 19 and 20). In addition, the Advisory Committee notes than an estimate for the resource requirements of the International Trade Centre (ITC) in the amount of $36.7 million has been included in the overall budget request, but the detailed budget fascicle, to be issued under the symbol A/72/6 (Sect. 13), will not be

[2] Revised estimates relating to the Office of Counter-Terrorism under section 3, Political affairs, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, and section 36, Staff assessment, have since been reflected in a separate report of the Secretary-General (A/72/117). The conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee will be provided in a separate report, to be issued under the symbol A/72/7/Add.1.

considered until late 2017, in line with a simplified budget procedure approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/248 A.

21. **Recognizing that several reform initiatives had been launched at the time of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, the outcome of which may have an impact on the resource requirements of the Organization, the Advisory Committee notes that related adjustments to the budget proposal may arise during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly and thereafter, and that those would be considered in accordance with established budgetary procedures.**

Other assessed and extrabudgetary resources

22. Other assessed resources of $670.5 million consisting of estimates in respect of the support account for peacekeeping operations and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals are set out in schedule 9 of the Secretary-General's introduction. The amount represents an increase of $5.2 million, or 0.8 per cent, in relation to the estimated resource level for 2016-2017. The Secretary-General indicates that this increase relates primarily to estimates under the support account (ibid., para. 56).

23. The level of extrabudgetary resources during the biennium 2018-2019 is projected at $21.3 billion, which represents a decrease of $178.4 million, or 0.8 per cent, compared with the estimated resource level for 2016-2017 (ibid., schedule 10 and para. 57).

24. As indicated in schedule 1 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget, the estimated total for activities funded by the net regular budget ($4,978.6 million), other assessed resources ($670.5 million) and extrabudgetary funds for the biennium 2018-2019 ($21.3 billion) amounts to $26.96 billion after preliminary recosting, or 1 per cent below the level of the 2016-2017 resources (excluding the estimates for peacekeeping missions). Further details relating to the actions taken by the Advisory Committee relating to voluntarily funded activities and posts are contained in section F below.

Documentation in support of the budget proposal

25. As a matter of general procedure, the Advisory Committee, as part of its consideration of budget proposals, routinely seeks clarifications and additional information in order to gain a better understanding of the proposals before it, to assist in its deliberations and to finalize the observations and recommendations contained in its reports.

26. During its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee made a number of requests for information where, in its view, the responses were unsatisfactory, remained unanswered or were submitted only several weeks after the initial request.

27. Specifically, the Advisory Committee sought a consolidated list of the $58.9 million in "other changes" to the resource requirements, referred to in paragraph 13 (d) above, explaining: (a) how the proposed reductions would be achieved; (b) the extent to which the reductions could be considered efficiencies; and (c) in the case of the efficiencies identified, whether or not they could be linked directly to the implementation of the Secretariat's enterprise resource planning system, Umoja.

28. The Advisory Committee recalls that similar requests for clarifying detail were made concerning efficiencies identified in the context of the Committee's consideration of the budget proposal for the biennium 2016-2017. At that time, the

Secretariat was able to respond to most of the requests for additional information, including a consolidated breakdown of staff and non-staff reductions by budget section, a list of posts that the Secretary-General proposed to freeze, a description of cross-cutting efficiency measures and clarification as to how various reductions were allocated across different sections of the budget (see A/70/7, paras. 42-44, and annexes III and IV).

29. Another example relates to the Advisory Committee's requests for additional information pertaining to past expenditure patterns, including the requirement for an analysis of the variance between budgeted and actual expenditure levels across all objects of expenditure in all budget sections. The recommended provision of such supplemental detail was first requested by the Committee in the context of its consideration of the budget proposals for the biennium 2016-2017 (ibid., para. 67). In its resolution 70/247, the General Assembly endorsed the Committee's recommendation that such information be provided routinely in the context of future budget proposals so as to ensure a better substantiation of the resource requirements for the subsequent budget period and allow for more informed resource allocation decisions.

30. The Advisory Committee notes that, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, no variance analysis pertaining to the period 2014-2015 was provided, while information pertaining to the current period, 2016-2017, was made available only upon request and in a number of cases contained little useful detail. Furthermore, for a number of budget sections, the expenditure details contained coding and classification errors across several different budget lines, yet a request for a consolidated list of the errors, setting out the full impact on the overall funding proposal, was not forthcoming. **In the view of the Committee, the provision of information which contains errors compromises the analytical value and overall utility of that information.**

31. In that connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that an important benefit expected from Umoja was the provision of timely, accurate and detailed information to allow analysis with respect to budget execution for the most recently completed financial period, which would in turn help inform the preparation of proposals for the subsequent budget period (ibid.). The Committee also recalls that the direct costs of the implementation of the Umoja project are estimated to reach $466.2 million by the end of 2017 (see A/71/628, para. 50).

32. **The Advisory Committee notes with serious concern that despite a significant investment of resources and repeated assertions that implementation of Umoja and its use would improve the availability of information and analysis, the introduction of Umoja has not resulted in the anticipated improvements in the quality or timeliness of the information provided to the Committee in support of the Secretary-General's budget proposal for the biennium 2018-2019.** Further comments and recommendations with respect to Umoja are contained in section B below.

33. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to address the deficiencies in information provided in support of future budget proposals as a matter of priority.**

34. In addition, requests for the provision of detailed breakdowns in respect of both past and proposed expenditures under the budget lines for official travel and consultants under all budget sections were only partially satisfied. For example, cost projections with respect to individual trips and consultant engagements were not provided, and detail on the actual versus planned expenditures for the current period (2016-2017) could be provided for almost none of the budget sections, although

similar information for the period from July 2016 to June 2017 had been provided in the context of the Advisory Committee's recent consideration of peacekeeping budget proposals. Regarding consultants, a request for the conversion of estimated resource requirements into "full-time equivalent" in dollar terms was not provided. **The Committee points out that the absence of sufficient information limited its ability to complete a full analysis for those two budget lines.** Further comments on the resource requirements for travel and consultancies are contained in section D below.

35. On a related issue, as a matter of practice, the Secretary-General includes in his budget proposal information on the status of implementation of recommendations of oversight bodies that have been endorsed by the General Assembly and that the Secretary-General has an obligation to implement. In that regard, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee notes that the information disclosed in the annexes to each budget fascicle was often incomplete. **The Committee trusts that in future budget proposals, the information pertaining to the implementation of the recommendations of the oversight bodies will be presented with the necessary consistency across all sections of the budget.**

A. Budget methodology, format and presentation

36. The Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly reaffirmed the established budgetary procedures and methodologies based on its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 and also reaffirmed that no changes to the budget methodology, to established budgetary procedures and practices or to the financial regulations could be implemented without prior review and approval by the Assembly, in accordance with established budgetary procedures (resolution 70/247, paras. 9 and 10).

37. The Secretary-General indicates that the methodology used for preparing the resource requirements for his budget proposal is based on the principles set out in General Assembly resolution 47/212 A, the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. The Secretary-General also states that, in line with Assembly resolution 71/274, the proposed programme budget includes a preliminary provision for recosting on the basis of the existing methodology (A/72/6 (Introduction), paras. 4 and 5). More detailed information on recosting is provided in paragraphs 40-43 below.

Presentation of the performance measures and outputs

38. The Secretary-General indicates that each of the budget fascicles includes logical framework elements, comprising the objectives of the Organization, the expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and the indicators of achievement, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/6 and reflected in the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6/Rev.1) (A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 6). Proposed changes arising as a result of new and/or revised mandates have been submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fifty-seventh session. That Committee's related conclusions and recommendations are contained in its report (A/72/16).

39. In line with General Assembly resolution 70/247, information on performance measures now includes details across four bienniums so as to allow for the comparison of longer-term trends (see A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 9). Additional presentational changes are also reflected in the proposed programme budget. In his introduction, the Secretary-General indicates that there remains scope for further

improvement in this regard, particularly with respect to the provision of more complete and meaningful descriptions of outputs, precise and standard nomenclature and the unit of measurement of the outputs. He indicates his intention to pursue such further changes in the next proposed programme budget (ibid., para. 12). **The Advisory Committee considers that the aforementioned changes improve the overall clarity of the budget documents and facilitate review and comparison by Member States. The Committee welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General to further improve the presentation of performance measures and outputs and trusts that any future proposed presentational changes will be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration.**

Recosting

40. The Secretary-General's budget proposal indicates that in accordance with the existing budget methodology and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/274, the proposals for the biennium 2018-2019, before recosting, are based on the 2016-2017 revised appropriation rates that were presented in the context of the first performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/71/576). The resource requirements are subsequently recosted to take into account projected inflation levels for 2018-2019 on the basis of projected post adjustment multipliers and the forecasted cost-of-living adjustments and exchange rates (A/72/6 (Introduction), paras. 51 and 52 and annex, schedules 6 and 7).

41. In its resolution 69/274 A, the General Assembly decided that forward exchange rates should be used in preparing future budget estimates, commencing with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. In that connection, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Organization had entered into a forward contract in respect of Swiss francs and euros in October 2016 and that predefined forward exchange rates for those currencies had been used in the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. The rates will be updated in December 2017 in line with the established methodology.

42. In addition, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the International Civil Service Commission with the best estimates for inflation in order to improve estimates for inflation-driven recosting. In line with that request, the Secretary-General indicates that the projected inflation rates for the medical component of the post adjustment multipliers for 2018-2019 are based on the actuarial valuation of the end-of-service and post-employment benefit schemes as at 31 December 2016 (ibid., para. 52).The Committee's comments with respect to the provisions for after-service health insurance are contained in chapter II, section 32, below.

43. The preliminary estimate for recosting amounts to $127.6 million, representing 2.9 per cent of the regular budget proposal (excluding special political missions), and will be updated in December 2017 to take into account the latest rates available prior to the start of the biennium 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 55). The Advisory Committee will revert to this matter in the context of its review of the report of the Secretary-General containing the revised estimates for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 resulting from the effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation.

Vacancy rates

44. With respect to the vacancy rates assumed in the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, the Secretary-General, in accordance with the established budget methodology, proposes a continuation of the approved vacancy rate for continuing posts of 10.1 per cent for Professional posts,

7.1 per cent for General Service posts and 50 per cent for new posts, as reported in the first performance report for the biennium 2016-2017 (ibid., para. 54). By comparison, the average vacancy rate for the period from 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2017 was 9.9 per cent for Professional posts and 7.5 per cent for General Service posts. Upon request, the Advisory Committee requested updated information, which showed little variation in the actual average vacancy rates for April and May 2017. **The Committee recommends that the vacancy rates proposed by the Secretary-General be used as the basis for the calculation of the budget for the biennium 2018-2019.**

Discontinued outputs

45. In accordance with regulation 5.6 and rule 105.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, the Secretary-General reports that 287 outputs delivered in 2016-2017, or approximately 0.6 per cent of the total number of estimated outputs, will be discontinued in 2018-2019. The discontinuation of outputs is reported in the relevant sections of the budget (ibid., para. 61 and table 8).

Monitoring and evaluation

46. The proposed programme budget identifies resources related to monitoring and evaluation within each section, pursuant to paragraph 20 of General Assembly resolution 58/269. Resources for monitoring and evaluation activities, covering mandatory self-assessments and discretionary self-evaluations, are summarized in paragraphs 62-66 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget.

47. The Secretary-General indicates that for 2018-2019, the resources devoted to monitoring and evaluation, including activities funded from extrabudgetary and other assessed contributions, would amount to $61.7 million, representing an overall increase of $2.1 million over the estimates for the biennium 2016-2017. The regular budget provision is $26.1 million, a decrease of $2.3 million as compared with 2016-2017, while other assessed provisions and extrabudgetary resources account for $4.4 million and $31.3 million, respectively (A/72/6 (Introduction), Corr.1, para. 64 and table 9).

48. In its report on the budget proposal for the biennium 2016-2017, the Advisory Committee requested that more information on the main evaluation activities planned by each department be included in future budget proposals, as well as information on major evaluation activities that were carried out and on how lessons learned were implemented (A/70/7, para. 61). The Committee notes that additional information has been provided in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, including specific examples in which the results of past evaluations and feedback from beneficiaries have helped to identify programmatic improvements (A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 66). The Committee also notes, however, that a related recommendation, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/247, that the Secretary-General be requested to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the impact of monitoring and evaluation activities on programme design and resource allocation across the different sections, has not yet been reflected in the proposed programme budget.

49. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon request, that a report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (A/72/72) addressed this subject. A breakdown of the types of structures addressing self-evaluation functions is provided in table 3 below. Upon further enquiry, the Committee was informed that those entities identified as having no evaluation unit or evaluation activity in 2015

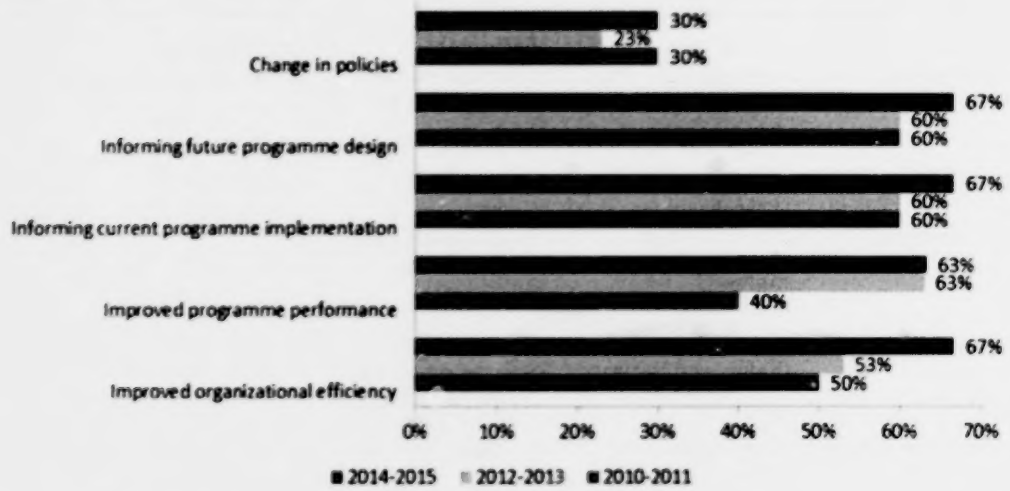
(the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Office at Vienna and the United Nations Office at Nairobi) foresaw evaluation activities for the biennium 2018-2019. The impact of evaluation reports over the past three bienniums is indicated in figure I below. Nevertheless, the Committee was also informed that OIOS had determined that only 27 per cent of entities had formally instituted procedures to track recommendations arising from evaluations and that there was no central repository for all of the evaluations conducted and the ensuing recommendations.

Table 3
Structures performing self-evaluation functions as at 31 December 2015

Stand-alone evaluation unit	*Dedicated evaluation unit within a multifunctional division*	*Unit not dedicated to evaluation (includes other activities within a multifunctional division)*	*No evaluation unit but some evaluation activity*	*No evaluation unit and no evaluation activity*
Department of Public Information	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management	Economic Commission for Europe	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Office for Disarmament Affairs
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Department of Management	United Nations Office at Nairobi
United Nations Environment Programme	Department of Safety and Security	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Department of Political Affairs	United Nations Office at Vienna
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Economic Commission for Africa		Office for Outer Space Affairs	
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific		Office of Legal Affairs	
United Nations Human Settlements Programme	International Trade Centre		Office of the Special Adviser on Africa	
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States	
	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights		United Nations Office at Geneva	

Stand-alone evaluation unit	*Dedicated evaluation unit within a multifunctional division*	*Unit not dedicated to evaluation (includes other activities within a multifunctional division)*	*No evaluation unit but some evaluation activity*	*No evaluation unit and no evaluation activity*
	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East			

Figure I
Outcome of evaluation reports, 2010-2011, 2012-2013 and 2014-2015
(Proportion of entities)



Source: OIOS focal points survey.

50. **While recognizing the improvements in the level and quantity of information on monitoring and evaluation activities reflected in the budget fascicles, the Advisory Committee continues to note differences in the level of detail disclosed in the individual budget fascicles (see A/68/7, para. 67, and A/70/7, para. 61). Moreover, the source of funding for such activities, as well as the modalities for their performance (i.e. self-evaluation, OIOS-conducted evaluation or external third-party evaluation), differ significantly from one budget section to the next.**

51. **The Advisory Committee trusts that efforts will be made to improve the consistency of information provided on the evaluation activities across all budget sections, along with a clearer demonstration of expected programmatic impact and implementation of lessons learned. In addition, a description of the impact of past evaluations on the budget proposals should also be included.**

B. Proposed level of resources

52. As indicated in paragraph 7 above, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 of $5,405.05 million reflects an increase of $10.0 million, or 0.2 per cent, as compared with the indicative figure established in the approved

budget outline ($5,395.0 million). **The Advisory Committee recognizes that the Secretary-General has presented a budget proposal for 2018-2019 which is broadly consistent with the indicative level established by the General Assembly in its decision on the budget outline for the same period (resolution 71/274, para. 7).**

53. **The Advisory Committee also points out that the indicative budget level set out in the budget outline does not represent a pre-approved ceiling, but rather a preliminary estimate of resource requirements, while recognizing the authority of the Secretary-General as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization and his responsibility to present a budget proposal reflecting the resources required to carry out the programmes and activities mandated by the General Assembly and other organs.**

54. **The Advisory Committee once again recalls its view that effective and efficient mandate delivery must always be the overriding factor in determining the Secretariat's resource requirements and its overall staffing structure (A/68/7, para. 19, and A/70/7, para. 21).**

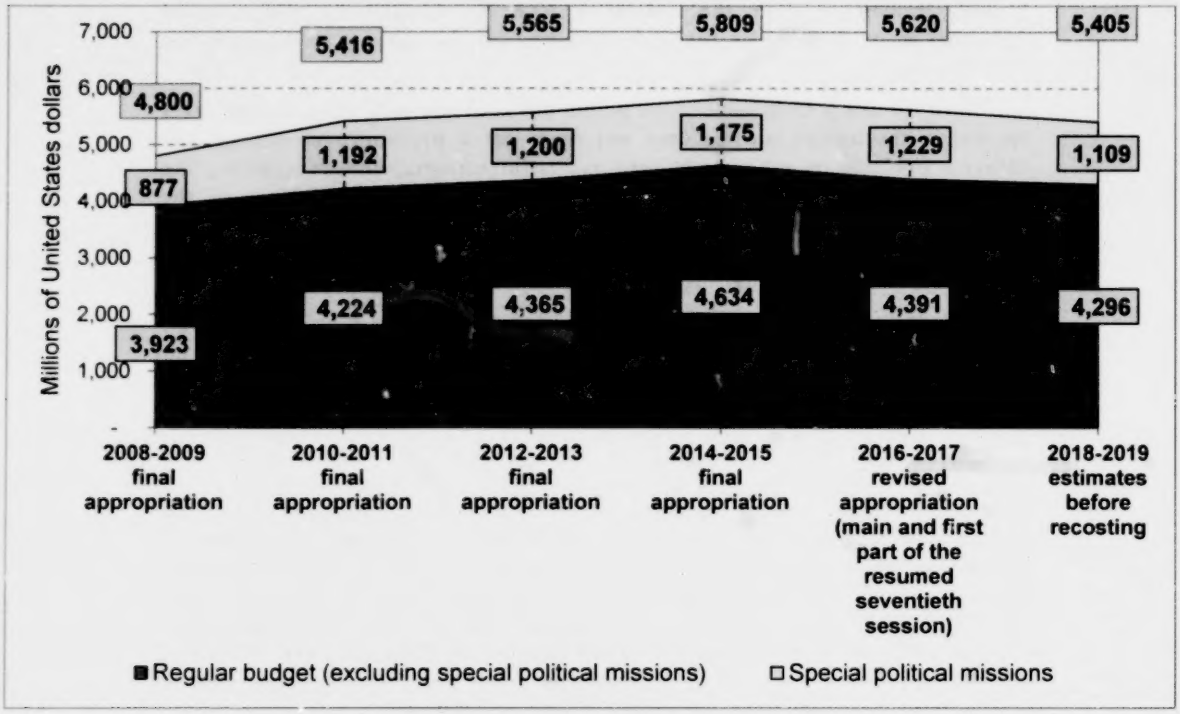
55. As regards the estimated requirements for special political missions, the Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly's decision on the proposed programme budget outline indicated that the preliminary estimate should be inclusive of a related provision of $1,124.4 million. However, the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 includes a reduced amount of $1,109.6 million, which, according to the Secretary-General, reflects planned efficiency gains totalling $14.8 million across all special political missions. The Committee points out that detailed budget proposals for those missions for 2018 and 2019 will not be considered until late 2017 and 2018, respectively, and that it will not be possible to verify details pertaining to the promised efficiencies before that time.

56. The Advisory Committee notes that the overall proposed budget level of $5,405.05 million for 2018-2019 is in fact $24.8 million[3] higher than the established baseline, taking into account the adjusted estimates for special political missions.

57. In this connection, the Advisory Committee was provided with information, reflected in figure II below, depicting resources approved for special political missions as a proportion of the overall programme budget since 2008. The Committee notes that the level of resources approved for special political missions contained in recent bienniums is between 7 and 10 per cent higher than the amount set aside in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. **The Committee notes that the level of the provision for special political missions — whether in the budget outline proposal, the related resolution of the General Assembly or the proposed programme budget — can only be considered an indicative figure, which cannot be properly scrutinized prior to the submission of budget proposals for the individual missions.**

[3] Including $10.0 million and $14.8 million, as reflected in paragraphs 52 and 55 above.

Figure II
Resources for special political missions as a proportion of the biennial programme budget



Overall approach

58. Regarding the overall approach taken by the Secretary-General with respect to the budget proposal, the Advisory Committee notes certain inconsistencies in terms of the resource requirements that have been included in or excluded from the proposal. For example, $13,321,574.0 million, representing the Secretariat's contribution to the United Nations resident coordinator system, was included under new mandates, even though the refined proposal on the related cost-sharing arrangement requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/272 B had not been completed. The Committee notes that the amount of the provision simply replicated the amount included in the estimates for the biennium 2016-2017. This approach to the budget proposal contrasts with the decision to exclude resource requirements relating to various construction and maintenance projects, in line with the recommendation of the Committee, which was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/247 (see also para. 20 above).

59. Similarly, $1.3 million in additional post and non-post resources has been included for UN-Women, section 17, to increase its support to normative intergovernmental processes. This increase is attributed to General Assembly resolutions dating back several years (resolutions 64/289 and 65/259) (see A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 28 (i)). At the same time, no additional resources are proposed for the strengthening of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) under section 26, Palestine refugees, despite a related decision of the Assembly, also from the sixty-fifth session, to support the institutional strengthening of the Agency through the provision of financial resources from the regular budget (resolution 65/272, para. 4).

60. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General needs to improve the level of strategic oversight exercised in the preparation of his budget proposal to ensure that approaches taken to budget preparation are consistent across different departments and offices.**

Categorization of resource changes

61. The presentation of the budget proposal for the biennium 2018-2019 adheres to the Advisory Committee's recommendation on the categorization and presentation of resource changes, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/247. The Committee, however, notes instances in which the presentation of certain resource changes continues to lack transparency. This includes the classification of proposed requirements relating to the Secretariat's contribution to the United Nations resident coordinator system under new mandates (see para. 58 above). The Committee also questions whether additional resources requested under section 24, Human rights, can be attributed to new or expanded mandates, since the requirements outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the human rights treaty body system (A/71/118) were not endorsed in the related Assembly resolution (resolution 71/185). Further observations and recommendations of the Committee on these two matters are contained in the respective sections in chapter II below.

62. The proposal also reflects net reductions of $58.9 million attributed to efficiencies of $64.3 million proposed by different offices and departments, offset in part by increased resource requirements of $5.4 million in support of new initiatives (A/72/6 (Introduction), paras. 32 and 41). The Secretary-General indicates that the efficiencies are attributable to: (a) specific initiatives (such as Umoja and other technologies, including the introduction of new applications in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management); (b) the implementation of cross-cutting measures to reduce the resource requirements for consultants, equipment and travel; and (c) resource changes arising from the reorganization of work within individual departments (ibid., paras. 34-40).

63. From its review of individual budget sections, the Advisory Committee considers that the category of "other changes" includes resource reductions that cannot be properly attributed to any specific efforts to improve efficiency or effectiveness. These include reductions in the number and frequency of certain expert group meetings; the publication of certain documents only online; reductions in provisions for sick and maternity leave; reductions based on past expenditure patterns; and reductions in provisions for hospitality expenditures. The Committee also points out that $14.8 million worth of reductions pertains to efficiencies in the special political missions not yet identified (see para. 55 above). Furthermore, a proposed reduction of $717,500 in the lump-sum grant provided to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to cover its administrative expenses has, in the view of the Committee, no connection with efficiency per se, particularly given the absence of any related information demonstrating such a connection (see also chap. II, sect. 25, below).

64. **The Advisory Committee considers that further improvements are needed to enhance the clarity of resource changes presented in future budget proposals. These include the need to: (a) ensure that all changes reflected under new and expanded mandates derive directly from recent decisions of intergovernmental bodies; and (b) distinguish between reductions that are the clear result of verifiable efficiency measures and/or technological improvements, as distinct from all other proposed resource changes.**

Composition of reductions in "other resources"

65. The distribution of the proposed reductions across the different sections of the budget and the related percentage reductions as compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017 are set out in table 4 below.

Table 4
Breakdown of reductions in other resources, by budget section

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Budget section		*Appropriation, 2016-2017*	*Proposed reduction, 2018-2019*	
			Amount	*Percentage*
1	Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	117 372.9	(723.2)	(0.6)
2	General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management	631 101.5	(7 139)	(1.1)
3	Political affairs	1 346 045.3	(15 839.6)[a]	(1.2)
4	Disarmament	24 868.9	(315.9)	(1.3)
5	Peacekeeping operations	109648.4	(1 447.9)	(1.3)
6	Peaceful uses of outer space	7 222.6	(60.7)	(0.8)
7	International Court of Justice	45814.7	–	(0.0)
8	Legal affairs	61 539.6	(548.4)	(0.8)
9	Economic and social affairs	162 147.6	(1 725.1)	(1.0)
10	Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	10 763.0	(113.6)	(1.0)
11	United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development	16 605.8	(153.8)	(0.9)
12	Trade and development	138 422.2	(1 698.1)	(1.2)
13	International Trade Centre	37 091.8	(406.5)[b]	(1.0)
14	Environment	37 097.3	(613.0)	(1.6)
15	Human settlements	22 074.4	(282.3)	(1.3)
16	International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice	37232.3	(967.4)	(2.5)
17	UN-Women	15 089.7	(99.6)	(0.7)
18	Economic and social development in Africa	153 449.1	(2 200.6)	(1.4)
19	Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific	95 411.4	(1 385.4)	(1.4)
20	Economic development in Europe	65 938.5	(1 015)	(1.5)
21	Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean	106 931.0	(1 304.1)	(1.2)
22	Economic and social development in Western Asia	70 088.3	(969.3)	(1.3)
23	Regular programme of technical cooperation	59 432.0	(603.9)	(1.0)
24	Human rights	212 034.3	(2 757.8)	(1.3)
25	International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees	85 362.6	(717.5)	(0.8)
26	Palestinian refugees	55137.3	–	(0.0)
27	Humanitarian assistance	36 946.1	(779.2)	(2.1)
28	Public information	187 570.1	(2 047.7)	(1.1)
29A	Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management	22 710.9	(275.6)	(1.2)
29B	Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts	34 706.1	(500)	(1.4)
29C	Office of Human Resources Management	70 288.3	(829.3)	(1.1)

Budget section		Appropriation, 2016-2017	Proposed reduction, 2018-2019	
			Amount	Percentage
29D	Office of Central Support Services	166 996.3	(1 422.3)	(0.8)
29E	Office of Information and Communications Technology	97 771.0	(3 718.3)	(3.8)
29F	Administration, Geneva	139 377.9	(1 972.4)	(1.4)
29G	Administration, Vienna	34 030.8	(558.4)	(1.6)
29H	Administration, Nairobi	29 405.7	(691.2)	(2.3)
30	Internal oversight	40 148.4	(453.1)	(1.1)
31	Jointly financed activities	11 503.6	(13.4)	(0.1)
32	Special expenses	153 244.8	(326.5)	(0.2)
33	Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance	109 309.0	(670.9)	(0.6)
34	Safety and security	238 283.4	(2 077.7)	(0.8)
35	Development Account	28 398.8	–	(0.0)
36	Staff assessment	495 607.9	(4 867.1)	(0.9)
	Total	**5 620 221.60**	**(64 290.80)**	**(1.1)**

[a] Including $14.8 million in reductions pertaining to special political missions, reflecting a 1.3 per cent reduction against the preliminary level established in the budget outline.
[b] Budget proposal is to be submitted for consideration later in 2017.

66. The Advisory Committee notes that the reductions in their entirety represent 1.1 per cent of the level of the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. As regards their relative impact on individual sections of the budget, the reductions represent from 0.6 to 3.8 per cent of the amounts approved for individual budget sections in 2016-2017. The sections least affected in percentage terms include section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination; section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space; section 8, Legal affairs; section 17, UN-Women; section 29C, Office of Central Support Services; section 33, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance; and section 34, Safety and security. In addition, the Committee notes that no related reductions were proposed under section 7, International Court of Justice, or section 26, Palestine refugees. The Committee also notes that neither the International Court of Justice nor UNRWA has elected to implement Umoja.

67. Furthermore, from its review of individual budget sections, the Advisory Committee notes that some of the 125 posts proposed for abolishment by certain departments and offices and presented as the result of efficiencies are substantive posts. These include a D-1 Principal Economic Affairs Officer post in the Economic Commission for Europe; a P-4 Information Technology Officer post in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; a P-3 Social Affairs Officer post in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; two P-2 posts, for an Associate Economic Affairs Officer and an Associate Information Systems Officer, in the Economic Commission for Africa; one P-2 Economic Affairs Officer post in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and a P-2 Associate Statistician post in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Secretary-General states that the proposed post changes will not have a negative impact on full and effective mandate delivery (ibid., para. 46).

68. In many of these instances, it is indicated in the information provided to the Advisory Committee that the related post was or would soon become unencumbered. In the view of the Committee, this appears to have been a factor in the decision to propose the post for abolishment. **The Committee stresses that the**

main determinants for including post requirements in the budget proposal should be whether or not there is an ongoing need for the respective functions and an assessment of how best those functions can be performed.

69. The Advisory Committee also notes with concern that four of the seven posts mentioned above are at the P-2 level — the normal entry level for Professionals in the Secretariat — and that a reduction in employment opportunities at that level could have a long-term impact on efforts to rejuvenate the Organization and achieve other enterprise-wide human resources goals (see also paras. 89-95 below). Detailed observations and recommendations with respect to posts are contained in the respective sections in chapter II below.

70. As regards efficiencies attributable to the implementation of Umoja, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that $27.8 million in Umoja-related efficiencies under the regular budget had already been identified and reported in the Secretary-General's eighth progress report on the enterprise resource planning project prior to the General Assembly's decision on the budget outline for the biennium 2018-2019 (A/71/390, table 2). This was the result of an assessment of the impact of benefits realized in past bienniums and anticipated future roll-outs, as well as improvements to business processes brought about by Umoja. According to the Secretariat, there have been improvements pertaining to finance-related processes, human resources and travel administration, and information technology and data management, which are described in the introduction to the proposed programme budget (A/72/6 (Introduction), paras. 35-37). It is also indicated that estimates on a full-time-equivalent basis as applied to the whole spectrum of the Organization's operations, reflecting time and process efficiencies, were "transformed into budgetary impact" and the resulting post or non-post reductions per department and office (ibid., para. 40).

71. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that, following the General Assembly's decision to invite the Secretary-General to submit a budget outline on the basis of a preliminary estimate that fell some $217 million below his proposal, a further review was undertaken, and departments subsequently put forward measures to achieve efficiencies, enabled by Umoja as well as other factors. The Committee was further informed that, according to the Secretariat, an exact distinction between Umoja-enabled and other efficiencies could not be drawn.

72. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that in the context of its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, it was provided with detailed information pertaining to $4.7 million in estimated benefits directly attributed to Umoja that would accrue to those operations for the 12-month financial period ending 30 June 2018 (A/71/836, para. 82). **The Committee notes that the approaches taken to identifying specific quantifiable Umoja-related savings differs between the peacekeeping operations and the regular-budget entities of the Secretariat.**

73. **The Advisory Committee stresses its view that the budget proposal of the Secretary-General appears to place greater emphasis on the achievement of resource reduction targets than on the expected impact of the proposed reductions on the respective programmes (see also A/70/7, para. 77). The Committee is not convinced that all of the proposed reductions can be attributed to efficiency measures, including the implementation of Umoja.**

74. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the General Assembly will be provided with a consolidated list of reductions categorized under "other resource changes" at the time of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. This information should allow the Assembly to assess: (a) how those reductions will be achieved; (b) the extent to**

which they can be considered efficiencies; and (c) those that can be specifically attributed to the implementation of Umoja.

75. **In view of the assurance given by the Secretary-General that the budget proposals for the biennium 2018-2019 will allow full and effective mandate delivery, the Advisory Committee does not object to any of the aforementioned reductions, while stressing that the Secretary-General should monitor their impact throughout the course of the biennium and report thereon in his performance reports.**

76. Regarding the broader matter of the impact and benefits of Umoja, the Advisory Committee recalls the observation it made in the context of its consideration of the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390), when it emphasized the need for a more robust business case for the Umoja project, which should reflect actual efficiencies and benefits achieved through the implementation of the solution rather than artificial budget reduction targets. The Committee also indicated that realistic benefit realization plans needed to be developed for implementing entities, with details on both qualitative and quantitative benefits (see also A/71/628, para. 37).

77. The General Assembly noted that insufficient progress had been made in the development of a benefit realization plan and requested the Secretary-General to accelerate the development of such a plan, taking fully into account the relevant recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and to report thereon in the next progress report. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, at the main part of its seventy-second session, an updated business case for the Umoja project, including an analysis of all the direct and indirect costs and benefits (resolution 71/272 A, sect. XIV, paras. 13 and 15).

78. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the next annual progress report on the implementation of Umoja will include the above-mentioned updated business case and the details of the benefit realization plan. The Committee also trusts that the report will contain detailed information relating to the realization of qualitative and quantitative benefits, including the impact of Umoja on the staffing and resource requirements of individual offices and departments. The Committee also looks forward to considering the forthcoming report of the Board of Auditors (A/72/157) on the implementation of the project and to examining the findings and recommendations of the Board, particularly with respect to the identification and realization of verifiable benefits.**

79. **In view of the Secretariat's inability to provide sufficient information quantifying Umoja-related efficiencies and benefits in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019, along with the serious gaps and flaws in the information-related benefits attributed to Umoja (see paras. 25-33 above), the Advisory Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to undertake a detailed verification exercise with a view to validating a statement of quantifiable Umoja-related benefits.**

C. Posts and personnel matters

Table 5
Post requirements

	Professional and higher category			*General Service and related categories*			*Total*		
Posts	*2016-2017*	*2018-2019*	*Increase (decrease)*	*2016-2017*	*2018-2019*	*Increase (decrease)*	*2016-2017*	*2018-2019*	*Increase (decrease)*
Established	4 748	4 775	27	5 283	5 154	(129)	10 031	9 929	(102)
Temporary	69	67	(2)	70	70	–	139	137	(2)
Total	**4 817**	**4 842**	**25**	**5 353**	**5 224**	**(129)**	**10 170**	**10 066**[a]	**(104)**

[a] Including 68 posts under Income section 3.

80. Table 5 summarizes the regular post requirements for 2018-2019 as compared with the authorized staffing table for 2016-2017. For the biennium 2018-2019, a total staffing level of 9,998 established and temporary posts is proposed under the expenditure sections of the regular budget, representing a net decrease of 92 posts compared with the biennium 2016-2017. Overall, this decrease relates to the proposed abolishment of 175 posts, partially offset by the establishment of 79 posts and the conversion of 4 posts (A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 46). In addition, 68 established posts are proposed under income sections in 2018-2019, reduced from 80 approved for 2016-2017, reflecting proposals to abolish 12 posts.

81. Of the 79 new posts, 42 are proposed in support of new or expanded mandates relating to: (a) 5 new regular budget posts under section 17, UN-Women, in support of the normative intergovernmental processes pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 64/289 and 65/259; (b) 3 proposed posts under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/208; (c) 11 proposed posts under section 24, Human rights, in support of the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system and various decisions of the Human Rights Council; (d) 18 proposed posts in support of parity of the six official languages under section 28, Public information; and (e) 5 proposed posts under section 29E, Office of Information and Communications Technology, in order to strengthen information security.

82. In addition, four posts are proposed for conversion from general temporary assistance (2 posts under section 8, Legal affairs, and 2 posts under section 9, Economic and social affairs).

83. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that of the 175 posts proposed for abolishment, 43 are to be abolished as a result of proposed changes to the post structure and are reflected under the category "changes within and/or across sections", while 132 post reductions are attributed to anticipated efficiencies under the category of "other changes" (see also paras. 65-75 above) (ibid., para. 46 and tables 5 and 6).

84. In addition, the budget proposal reflects a number of post redeployments across sections, including the proposed transfer of: (a) the Spokesperson's Office from section 28, Public information, to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General under section 1; and (b) the Crisis Management Information Support Section under section 34, Safety and security, to section 29E, Office of Information and Communications Technology (ibid., para. 30).

85. Tables 6 and 7 of the Secretary-General's introduction provide the breakdown of the proposed staffing level, by budget part, with post changes by type and source

of change. Details of the established and temporary posts authorized for the biennium 2016-2017 and proposed for the biennium 2018-2019, by budget section and post grade, are provided in schedule 4 of the introduction. The Advisory Committee was also provided with a breakdown of the number of regular budget posts by budget part and a summary of changes by budget section (see annexes I and II below).

86. Overall, the Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General's budget proposal results in a net increase in the number of posts allocated to: section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination (14 posts); section 17, UN-Women (4 posts); section 24, Human rights (9 posts); section 26, Palestine refugees (3 posts); section 29C, Office of Human Resources Management (1 post); section 29D, Office of Central Support Services (1 post); and section 29E, Office of Information and Communications Technology (10 posts). For all other budget sections, the budget proposal results in a net decrease in their post allocation, with the largest net reductions proposed in section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management (40 posts); section 18, Economic and social development in Africa (11 posts); section 19, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific (12 posts); and section 34, Safety and security (13 posts). Specific details on the proposed level of staffing are contained in the respective sections in chapter II below.

87. The Advisory Committee notes that in several fascicles it is stated that the proposed post changes are cost neutral, with proposed abolishments or downward reclassifications offsetting the additional resource requirements arising from a proposed upward reclassification or the creation of new posts. **The Committee considers that proposals on posts must always be justified on their own merits, taking into account the programmatic and/or workload requirements that are needed for the implementation of mandated programmes and activities. Any resources released through the downward reclassification or abolishment of posts that are no longer needed should not be viewed as being available for other uses.**

88. The introduction to the proposed programme budget also provides details on the distribution of posts, by category, over a 12-year period (ibid., figure XVII), showing a reduction in the proportion of staff in the General Service and related categories from 56 per cent in 2008-2009 to 52 per cent in 2018-2019 (on the basis of the estimates). Consequently, the ratio of General Service to Professional posts has declined from 1.26 to 1.07 over the same period. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with the number of posts at the level of D-1 and above over the same time period, as well as the ratio of D-1 posts to all other Professional and General Service posts, which is provided in table 6 below.

Table 6
Ratio of D-1 and higher posts to Professional-level posts and to combined Professional and General Service posts

	2008-2009[a]	2010-2011[a]	2012-2013[a]	2014-2015[a]	2016-2017[b]	2018-2019[c]
Number of posts						
Deputy Secretary-General/Under-Secretary-General/Assistant Secretary-General/D-2/D-1	428	440	455	464	470	476
P-1 to P-5	4 035	4 120	4 176	4 272	4 334	4 353
General Service	5 622	5 745	5 706	5 450	5 286	5 169
Total	**10 085**	**10 305**	**10 337**	**10 186**	**10 090**	**9 998**
Ratio (percentage)						
D-1 and higher to Professional posts	10.6	10.7	10.9	10.9	10.8	10.9
D-1 and higher to Professional and General Service posts	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.0
D-1 and higher to total posts	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.8

[a] On the basis of the final appropriation.
[b] On the basis of the 2016-2017 appropriation.
[c] On the basis of the estimates.

89. The Advisory Committee notes a progressive reduction in the proportion of General Service staff in the overall staffing profile since the biennium 2008-2009, while the proportion of senior posts with respect to all other staff has increased over that time. In fact, the number of senior-level posts (D-1 and higher) has risen by more than 11 per cent over that time. Upon further enquiry, the Committee was provided with a list of staff members serving at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels. As at 31 May 2017, there were 178 such staff serving in the Secretariat.[4]

90. In this regard, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, when presenting staffing proposals, to reflect their impact on the grade structure of the Organization, with a view to addressing the persistent problem of the increasing number of posts at the level of D-1 and above (resolution 70/247, para. 41).

91. Furthermore, the General Assembly noted with concern the upward shift in the grade structure of the Secretariat and the relatively low number of junior-level posts and requested the Secretary-General to take concrete measures to reverse this trend, with a view to identifying any overlapping functions and responsibilities and reducing the overall number of posts at those levels and to report thereon in his next budget submission (resolution 71/263, para. 33).

92. The Advisory Committee notes that the impact of the proposed post reductions falls mainly on the General Service and other categories, with a net reduction of 117 posts overall, and at the junior Professional level, with a net overall reduction of 18 posts at the P-3 level and 6 posts at the P-2/1 level (A/72/6 (Introduction), table 7). In this regard, the Committee recalls its comments in successive budget proposals and reports on human resources management regarding the detrimental effect on the ability of the Organization to attract and develop young talent in its rejuvenation efforts (see A/66/7, para. 86, A/68/7, paras. 86 and 87, A/69/572, para. 105, and A/71/557, para. 41).

[4] From all sources of funding, including staff serving on "when actually employed" and $1/year contracts.

93. **The Advisory Committee notes with concern that once again the proposed staffing profile for the Secretariat contained in the budget proposal shows an increasing number and proportion of senior posts at the level of D-1 and above (see also A/68/7, para. 102, and A/70/7, para. 88). Furthermore, the Committee notes that the budget proposal contains no information concerning any measures taken by the Secretary-General to reverse this trend, despite the related requests of the General Assembly in its resolutions 70/247 and 71/263.**

94. **The Advisory Committee is concerned that reductions in the lower Professional-level grades could have a negative impact on ongoing human resources management initiatives, such as the young professionals programme, and other efforts to achieve important human resources targets, such as those pertaining to geographic and gender balance, as well as efforts to rejuvenate the workforce of the Secretariat.**

95. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that the budget proposal properly reflects the different human resources policy directives of the Assembly as well as enterprise-wide staffing goals, including through more active involvement of the Office of Human Resources Management, as necessary.** The Committee will revert to matters concerning the overall staffing profile, the growth in senior-level positions and the progress of different human resources management initiatives in the context of its forthcoming review of human resources management matters.

96. In terms of the posts and positions financed from extrabudgetary and other assessed sources, the Advisory Committee was provided with a detailed distribution of posts, by level and by budget section, for the biennium 2018-2019 as compared with 2016-2017. An estimated 1,366 posts are to be funded from other assessed contributions (compared with 1,375 posts in 2016-2017).[5] Regarding posts and positions funded from extrabudgetary sources, there will be an estimated 18,537 such posts for the biennium 2018-2019 across the different budget sections compared with 18,504 posts in 2016-2017.

Long-vacant posts

97. In the context of previous discussions on the budget proposals and on human resources management, the Advisory Committee has expressed the view that the continuing requirement for posts that have been vacant for two years or longer should be reviewed and justifications proposed for their retention in the proposed programme budget. Otherwise, they should be proposed for abolishment (see A/70/7, para. 90, and A/68/7, para. 107). Schedule 15 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget contains a list of those posts that have been vacant for two years or more, by budget section. The Committee notes that there are only four such posts on the list. During its consideration of the budget proposal, the Committee sought additional details concerning the protracted nature of each vacancy and the status of the recruitment efforts. Related details are reflected in the Committee's observations on individual budget sections in chapter II below.

98. The Advisory Committee recalls its previous concerns with respect to the practice of "vacancy management" and the risk that the practice could mask situations in which, for long periods, posts are not used for their intended functions (A/68/7, para. 108, and A/66/7, para. 93). During the course of its consideration of the budget proposal, the Committee requested and received an update on those instances in which vacant posts had been used for temporary recruitment purposes over the

[5] This does not reflect the outcome of General Assembly resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

course of the biennium 2016-2017. **The Committee stresses that posts should either be utilized for the purposes for which they were intended or proposed for abolishment. The Committee intends to keep this matter under review in the context of its forthcoming review of human resources management matters.**

99. In this connection, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Secretariat distinguishes between posts considered vacant for budgetary purposes and those considered vacant for recruitment purposes. "Budgetary vacant status" refers to established posts against which no individual is being charged, while "human resources vacant status" refers to posts available for recruitment, which may be temporarily encumbered, but are not blocked for the return of a staff member or lien holder. **In order to facilitate its consideration of future budget proposals, the Committee requests that information provided to it on the vacancy status of posts distinguish between posts vacant from a budgetary standpoint and those available for recruitment.**

D. Non-post objects of expenditure

Other staff costs

100. The proposals for other staff costs for the biennium 2018-2019 of $342.6 million (before recosting) reflect a decrease of $27.3 million, or 7.4 per cent, in comparison with the 2016-2017 revised appropriation. Other staff costs are divided among: (a) temporary assistance for meetings; (b) general temporary assistance; (c) overtime and night differential; (d) personal service contracts; (e) other personnel-related costs; and (f) after-service medical coverage. The Advisory Committee notes that the overall reduction is due primarily to the non-recurrence of resources for temporary assistance in support of specific intergovernmental meetings in 2016-2017 that will not be required in 2018-2019. Information on the components of this category of expenditure is provided in annex III to the present report.

101. With respect to general temporary assistance, a provision of $107.8 million is made for the biennium 2018-2019. A list of 449 general temporary assistance positions funded as at 31 March 2017 is contained in schedule 14 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget. The Advisory Committee recalls that general temporary assistance is intended for additional support during periods of peak workload and the replacement of staff on maternity leave or prolonged sick leave.

Travel costs

102. The proposed requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 on travel of staff amount to $42.6 million, before recosting, reflecting an overall decrease of $2.1 million, or 4.8 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. The Advisory Committee notes that the estimate for 2018-2019 represents a 29 per cent reduction compared with the expenditure in 2014-2015. Schedule 16 of the introduction to the proposed budget contains a breakdown of the requirements for travel of staff by budget section.

103. At the start of its consideration of the budget proposal, the Advisory Committee sought a detailed breakdown of the staff travel requirements for the current period (2016-2017), as well as those proposed for the biennium 2018-2019 (including the purpose of travel, the number of travellers, the duration of travel, the anticipated costs of air tickets and daily subsistence allowance costs). In addition, the Committee requested information concerning the impact of the increased use of videoconferencing and other means of communication on travel requirements, which the Secretary-General has cited as one of the reasons for the proposed reductions in related non-post resource requirements (A/72/6 (Introduction), para. 39).

104. While the Advisory Committee received some information on travel for the biennium 2018-2019, more than six weeks after the original request, the data contained no detail pertaining to costs. With respect to the details pertaining to the 2016-2017 period, the Committee was informed that those data were not readily available owing to system limitations. The Committee was also informed that the system did not track the use of videoconferencing as an alternative to travel and that the related reductions in travel requirements could not be identified (see also para. 34 above).

105. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a sample set of standard airfare rates used in the budget proposals for travel originating in or returning to New York, which are reflected in annex IV to the present report. In the context of its review of one budget fascicle, the Committee was provided with information that facilitated a comparison of a small number of actual trip costs in 2016-2017 against the cost assumptions used as the basis for the 2018-2019 resource requirements. Owing to the very small sample size, however, the Committee is not drawing definitive conclusions at this stage. **The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide the General Assembly with more extensive detail concerning the budgetary assumptions relating to individual trip cost estimates in the budget proposal for 2018-2019.**

106. **The Advisory Committee regrets that, despite the introduction of the travel module in Umoja in 2016, information with respect to travel patterns, costs and the impact of policy changes continues to be lacking. The Committee stresses that such information would assist in ensuring that travel resources are used effectively and efficiently over time.**

107. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its views relating to the judicious use of travel resources, in particular its view that the primary consideration in authorizing official travel should be whether direct face-to-face contact is necessary for mandate implementation** (A/70/7, para. 108).

108. In the course of its most recent deliberations on the Secretary-General's budget proposal for 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee was provided with details, upon request, on the rates of compliance with advance booking requirements over the period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017. The compliance rate varies considerably between offices and locations and over time (see annex V below). The Committee notes, however, persistent compliance rates of less than 50 per cent in 18 of the 32 Secretariat departments or offices undertaking travel in the performance of their work, thereby leading to considerably higher than necessary travel costs. The Committee recalls that a target performance benchmark of 75 per cent compliance with the advance booking requirement has been established in peacekeeping operations (see A/71/845, para. 20, and A/70/803, para. 31). **The Committee would have expected a higher overall level of compliance across the Organization, particularly since this is the second biennium during which compliance with those requirements has been measured and given that most official travel is not carried out in connection with emergency situations or unforeseen requirements. The Committee also considers that no office or department of the Secretariat is exempt from ensuring maximum compliance with the advance booking requirements.**

109. **The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to put in place measures restricting future travel resources in departments and offices that have failed to demonstrate improved rates of compliance with advance booking requirements or have not provided adequate written explanations in cases where compliance with the requirements would not have been possible.**

Consultants

110. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/247, expressed concern over the increase in the use of consultants, especially in the core activities of the Organization. More recently, the Assembly has reaffirmed that the use of consultants should be kept to an absolute minimum and that their services should be used only when necessary, and stressed the need for using the in-house capacity of the Organization to perform core activities or to fulfil functions that are recurrent over the long term (resolutions 70/247, para. 45, and 71/263, para. 34).

111. The Advisory Committee notes that for the proposed programme budget as a whole for 2018-2019, the resource proposals for consultants of $23.7 million reflect a reduction of $5.5 million, or 18.9 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. Upon request, the Committee was provided with a detailed breakdown of the consultancies foreseen for the biennium 2018-2019, along with the estimated number of work-months, by subcomponent within each of the budget sections, and the estimated level of expertise required for the engagement.

112. During its consideration of individual budget fascicles, the Advisory Committee identified cases in which the intended scope of the proposed consultancy, the recourse to external rather than in-house expertise, the proposed length of the engagement and the categorization of expertise/level of remuneration could be called into question. Specific comments and recommendations on these requests are contained in the respective budget sections in chapter II below.

113. **While recognizing that the use of external consultants may be required to acquire specialized expertise not readily available in-house, the Advisory Committee recalls the stipulation of the General Assembly that the use of external consultants should be kept to an absolute minimum and that the Organization should use its in-house capacity to perform core activities or to fulfil functions that are recurrent over the long term. In view of the above-mentioned shortcomings, the Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to conduct a performance audit with respect to the use of consultants across the Secretariat and to report thereon in the context of volume I of its annual report on the financial statements of the United Nations.**

Grants and contributions

114. The proposed requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 under grants and contributions amount to $354.3 million before recosting, reflecting an overall increase of $6.1 million, or 1.7 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. From the supplementary information provided to it, the Advisory Committee notes that this expenditure category includes the following proposed resource requirements: (a) a lump-sum grant of $83.3 million to finance 218 posts in the management and administrative category at UNHCR, as well as part of the related non-post requirements (see chap. II, sect. 25, below); (b) $36.7 million representing the Secretariat's share of the estimated requirements for ITC; (c) $45.7 million included within the estimated requirements for section 2 (General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management), reflecting mainly the United Nations share of conference services in Vienna; (d) $57.8 million under section 34 (Safety and security), covering mainly the Secretariat's share of the costs of the jointly financed field security operations; (e) $28.4 million related to section 35 (Development Account); and (f) $27.1 million under section 29 (Management and support services).

115. The Advisory Committee was also informed, upon request, that under several other sections, proposals under this expenditure category included requirements for fellowships, travel of meeting participants, training courses and expenditures on consultants and experts engaged by implementing partners.

116. **The Advisory Committee notes that the "grants and contributions" object of expenditure contains a number of different elements, which vary depending on the section of the programme budget. The Committee considers that an analysis of this category is needed in order to improve the transparency and consistency of the information provided in future budget reports and trusts that additional details will be contained in future budget documents.**

E. Cost recovery practices

117. United Nations Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions provide a wide range of administrative and central support services to other parts of the Secretariat, United Nations system entities and external stakeholders. Such services include, for instance, the rental of premises or conference-servicing facilities; finance, banking, human resources management, procurement, travel and other administrative services; information technology and communications services; medical services; security services; language services; and other support services, such as mail and pouch services. The Advisory Committee notes varying practices with regard to the recovery of the costs of such services, which in some cases are provided free of charge.

118. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that services provided should, in principle, be charged to the beneficiary entities and that cost recovery should be applied in a harmonized manner. Regardless of the administrative and cost recovery arrangements, there is a need for transparent information on the number and types of services provided. The Committee recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to include information on the number and types of services provided by each office, as well as the related post and non-post resources and cost recovery income, in future budget submissions.**

119. **The Advisory Committee is also of the view that actual costs related to the provision of those services should be used to determine the rates charged in order to ensure that income generated fully covers the costs incurred.** For instance, in the case of rental of premises, the monthly rate per square metre should cover the totality of the expenditures incurred, such as security services, facilities management, cleaning, utilities, insurance and maintenance of premises and gardens, as well as any related costs for administrative and central support services. **In this regard, the Committee emphasizes the need for a standard methodology for estimating the real costs of support services. Such information should allow meaningful comparisons between the evolution of the resource requirements for administrative, conference and general services over time and any efficiency gains achieved, as well as cost comparisons for the provision of such services at different duty stations.**

120. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that in his eighth progress report on the implementation of Umoja, the Secretary-General indicated that the service delivery functionality of Umoja allowed all of the Secretariat entities providing services to internal and external clients to manage the costs of and billings for their services and that it would also pave the way for the harmonization of service catalogues and cost structures (see A/71/390, paras. 20 and 21). With regard to administrative support services, in its latest report on the global service delivery model (A/71/666), the Committee expressed its view that there was a need for information on the costing and cost recovery arrangements for the services

provided by shared service centres. **The Committee intends to revert to the above-mentioned issues in the context of its consideration of the Secretary-General's next progress reports on the implementation of Umoja and the global service delivery model.**

F. Extrabudgetary resources

121. As discussed in paragraph 23 above, details concerning the level of extrabudgetary resources expected to be available during the biennium 2018-2019, totalling $21.3 billion, are contained in schedule 10 of the introduction to the proposed programme budget.

122. The Advisory Committee reviews and submits reports on administrative or support budgets to UNHCR, UNRWA, UNODC, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the various programmes mentioned in annex VI to the present report. For the most part, the Committee examines other extrabudgetary resources maintained in special accounts in the context of its review of the proposed programme budget. The Committee also receives information biannually on the status of trust funds. In its consideration of those programmes, the Committee continues to pay particular attention to such system-wide initiatives as results-based budgeting and the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

123. Under the terms of section II, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 35/217, the Advisory Committee reviews proposals for all new posts at the D-1 level and higher funded through extrabudgetary sources that are not otherwise subject to scrutiny by an intergovernmental body. Since submitting its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, the Committee has reviewed the requests of the Secretary-General for the establishment or extension of extrabudgetary posts at the D-1 level and above. Those requests are reflected in table 7 below.

Table 7
Requests reviewed by the Advisory Committee for the establishment or extension of extrabudgetary posts at the D-1 level and above from August 2015 to July 2017

Position	*Date of initial request*
Establishment and extension of Deputy Director, D-1 post (Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force)	August 2015
Establishment of Assistant Secretary-General post (disaster risk reduction)	August 2015
Establishment of 8 D-1 posts in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, including: 3 for the heads of office in Iraq, southern Turkey and the regional office in Amman for the Syrian crisis; and 5 posts of heads of office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the occupied Palestinian territories, Pakistan, Myanmar and the Sudan	October 2015
Establishment of D-1 post, Principal Management and Programme Analyst (Department of Economic and Social Affairs)	October 2015
Establishment and extension of D-1 post, Chief Electoral Officer (United Nations Office to the African Union/Department of Political Affairs)	April 2016
Establishment and extension of D-1, Principal Officer (Executive Office of the Secretary-General)	April 2016

Position	*Date of initial request*
Extension of D-1 post, Principal Officer, (Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team)	June 2016
Extension of Under-Secretary-General post, Special Adviser on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	December 2016
Reclassification to the D-1 level of the Chief of the Secretariat of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)	February 2017
Establishment of an Under-Secretary-General post of Senior Adviser on Policy (Executive Office of the Secretary-General)	February 2017
Establishment and extension of an Under-Secretary-General post of Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (Executive Office of the Secretary-General)	February 2017
Establishment of 2 positions: Under-Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration; and D-1, Chief of Office	March 2017
Establishment of 2 positions: Assistant Secretary-General, Head of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011; and D-1, Principal Officer/Deputy Head of the Mechanism	April 2017
Establishment of D-2 position, Management Director (Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries)	May 2017
Extension of D-1 post, Principal Security Sector Reform Officer (Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen)	June 2017

124. **The Advisory Committee recalls paragraphs 39-41 of General Assembly resolution 64/243, in which the Assembly stressed that all extrabudgetary posts must be administered and managed with the same rigour as regular budget posts, that such resources shall be used in consistency with the policies, aims and activities of the Organization and that budget submissions should include clear and specific information on extrabudgetary resources, in order to make a distinction between voluntary and assessed contributions and programme support costs. The Committee continues to stress the importance of consistent application of the provisions of that resolution across all sections of the budget.**

G. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies

125. Since the issuance of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/70/7), the Advisory Committee has submitted a number of separate reports on different administrative and budgetary matters to various United Nations bodies pertaining to the documents listed in annex VI to the present report.

H. Conclusion

126. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail an overall reduction of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 by $42,891,400, before recosting.

Chapter II
Detailed recommendations on the proposed programme budget

Estimates of expenditure

Part I
Overall policymaking, direction and coordination

Section 1
Overall policymaking, direction and coordination

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$117,372,900
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$117,548,400
Other assessed resources	$19,088,200[a]
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$110,781,500

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

I.1 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 1 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $117,548,400 before recosting, representing a net increase of $175,500, or 0.1 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 1), table 1.3).

I.2 The Secretary-General attributes the net increase of $175,500 to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $3,780,600 reflecting the removal of non-recurrent requirements relating to the three ad litem judges of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal and the respective staffing complement; General Assembly resolution 71/260 on the investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him; and Assembly resolution 71/280 on the modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration;

(b) New and expanded mandates: an increase of $386,500 relating to Assembly resolution 70/305 on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly;

(c) Changes within and/or across sections: an increase of $3,477,400 reflecting the proposed redeployment of the Office of the Spokesperson, together with the related resources, including 12 posts (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 General Service (Principal level and 4 General Service (Other level)) and non-post resources from section 28, Public information;

(d) Other resource changes: a net increase of $92,200 comprising: (a) an increase of $815,400 resulting from the proposed establishment of three posts (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 D-1 and 1 P-4) to maintain strategic oversight of policy matters across all pillars of the work of the United Nations and to lead efforts

on system-wide coherence on conflict prevention; to implement the substantive work programme of the Human Rights Up Front initiative; and to support appeals and reviews on requests for protection against retaliation in the context of the whistle-blower policy set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2017/2; and (b) a decrease of $723,200 related to efficiencies that the various offices under section 1 plan to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed reduction is a result of, inter alia, the efforts of the various offices under section 1 to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

I.3 Table I.1 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the proposals of the Secretary-General for 2018-2019. It also shows the posts under other assessed and extrabudgetary resources projected for 2018-2019.

Table I.1
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Regular budget		
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions		
Approved for 2016-2017	10	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 3 P-4, 1 GS (PL) and 2 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	10	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 3 P-4, 1 GS (PL) and 2 GS (OL)
United Nations Board of Auditors		
Approved for 2016-2017	6	1 D-1, 1 P-3 and 4 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	6	1 D-1, 1 P-3 and 4 GS (OL)
Independent Audit Advisory Committee		
Approved for 2016-2017	2	1 P-5 and 1 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	2	1 P-5 and 1 GS (OL)
Executive Office of the Secretary-General		
Approved for 2016-2017	80	1 DSG, 1 USG, 1 ASG, 5 D-2, 7 D-1, 8 P-5, 9 P-4, 5 P-3, 2 P-2, 5 GS (PL) and 36 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	93	1 DSG, 2 USG, 1 ASG, 6 D-2, 8 D-1, 9 P-5, 11 P-4, 7 P-3, 2 P-2, 7 GS (PL) and 39 GS (OL)
Abolishments	(1)	1 GS (OL)
Office of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva		
Approved for 2016-2017	17	1 USG, 2 D-1, 2 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 2 GS (PL) and 6 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	17	1 USG, 2 D-1, 2 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 2 GS (PL) and 6 GS (OL)
Office of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna		
Approved for 2016-2017	9	1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 4 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	9	1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 4 GS (OL)

	Posts	Level
Office of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi		
Approved for 2016-2017	7	1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4 and 3 LL
Proposed for 2018-2019	7	1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4 and 3 LL
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict		
Approved for 2016-2017	10	1 USG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 2 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	10	1 USG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 2 GS (OL)
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict		
Approved for 2016-2017	8	1 USG, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	8	1 USG, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 GS (OL)
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children		
Approved for 2016-2017	10	1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 1 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	10	1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 GS (PL) and 1 GS (OL)
Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services		
Approved for 2016-2017	21	1 ASG, 2 D-1, 7 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 5 GS (OL) and 3 LL
Proposed for 2018-2019	21	1 ASG, 2 D-1, 7 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 5 GS (OL) and 3 LL
Office of Administration of Justice		
Approved for 2016-2017	36	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 5 P-5, 6 P-4, 9 P-3, 1 P-2, 11 GS (OL) and 2 LL
Proposed for 2018-2019	36	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 5 P-5, 6 P-4, 9 P-3, 1 P-2, 11 GS (OL) and 2 LL
Ethics Office		
Approved for 2016-2017	8	1 D-2, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 P-2, 1 GS (PL) and 1 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	9	1 D-2, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 P-2, 1 GS (PL) and 1 GS (OL)
Total approved for 2016-2017	**224**	**1 DSG, 5 USG, 3 ASG, 8 D-2, 16 D-1, 30 P-5, 33 P-4, 28 P-3, 5 P-2/1, 12 GS (PL), 75 GS (OL) and 8 LL**
Total proposed for 2018-2019	**238**	**1 DSG, 6 USG, 3 ASG, 9 D-2, 17 D-1, 31 P-5, 36 P-4, 30 P-3, 5 P-2/1, 14 GS (PL), 78 GS (OL) and 8 LL**
Other assessed and extrabudgetary[a]		
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions		
Projected for 2018-2019	1	1 P-4/P-3
United Nations Board of Auditors		
Projected for 2018-2019	1	1 GS (OL)
Executive Office of the Secretary-General		
Projected for 2018-2019	41	1 D-2, 2 D-1, 9 P-5, 18 P-4/P-3, 1 P-2/P-1 and 8 GS (OL)
Office of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva		
Projected for 2018-2019	3	3 GS (OL)
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict		
Projected for 2018-2019	1	1 D-1
Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services		
Projected for 2018-2019	9	3 P-5, 3 P-4/P-3, 2 FS and 1 GS (OL)
Office of Administration of Justice		
Projected for 2018-2019	1	1 P-4/3
Ethics Office		
Projected for 2018-2019	3	1 P-5, 1 P-3 and 1 GS (OL)

[a] Comprising 19 posts financed by other assessed resources and 41 extrabudgetary posts.

Comments and recommendations on posts

I.4 As shown in table I.1, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 238 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, representing a net increase of 14 posts when compared with the total number of posts approved for the biennium 2017-2017, comprising the proposed establishment of three posts (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 D-1 and 1 P-4) and the redeployment of the Office of the Spokesperson, together with the related resources including 12 posts (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 General Service (Principal level) and 4 General Service (Other level)) from section 28, Public information, to section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, partly offset by the abolishment of one General Service (Other level) post.

Abolishments

I.5 As shown in table I.1 above, it is proposed to abolish one General Service (Other level) post in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. From additional information provided by the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee notes that the abolishment is proposed owing to the efficiencies that the Office plans to bring about in 2018-2019.

I.6 **Subject to paragraphs I.20 and I.33 below, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for post resources for the offices of section 1.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

I.7 The proposed non-post resources for the biennium 2018-2019 for section 1 amount to $46,126,000, reflecting a decrease of $3,706,600, or 7.4 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 resources at revised rates.

I.8 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs I.12, I.13, I.20, I.28 and I.33 below, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for non-post resources for the offices of section 1.**

General comments and recommendations

General Assembly

I.9 Under non-post resources for backstopping of the President of the General Assembly, the proposed resources amounting to $2,506,100 reflect a net increase of $386,500 compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. The increase of $386,500 relates to Assembly resolution 70/305 on the revitalization of the work of the Assembly, including: (a) one new general temporary assistance position at the P-5 level to manage the continuity and transfer of knowledge between Presidents and sessions, assist in the preparation of the President's end-of-presidency report and in the handover of the President and/or the Office, for a duration of 5 years; and (b) additional general temporary assistance resources corresponding to an overlap period of one month for each of four positions (2 D-2, 1 D-1 and 1 P-5) to maximize the use of the transition period for incoming Presidents on an annual basis (A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para.1.26).

I.10 The Advisory Committee was provided with additional information by the Secretariat indicating that in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 58/126, 59/313 and 68/246, the proposed resources provide for a total of nine positions to be made available to the President of the General Assembly, namely: (a) the continuation of five positions (2 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5 and 1 General Service (Other Level)) under section 1 of the programme budget, to be filled on an annual basis in consultation with the incoming President, including an overlap period of one month

for four of these five positions (2 D-2, 1 D-1 and 1 P-5) in line with resolution 70/305; (b) three posts (1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2) under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, in the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management; and (c) the new P-5 position proposed in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/305. The Committee was informed that the proposed resources were in addition to the provisions intended for the exclusive use of the President (see A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.20 and table 1.9).

I.11 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that in addition to the eight posts and positions currently available to the Office of the President of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly indicated in para. I.10 (a) and (b) above, two General Service (Other level) positions are also provided by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, one P-5 (based on availability) is provided by the Department of Public Information under section 28 and a further four positions (1 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 P-5, 1 P-3 and 1 P-1) are currently funded from the trust fund in support of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. Lastly, the Committee was informed that 22 additional positions were currently available to the Office of the President of the seventy-first session of the Assembly pursuant to bilateral arrangements between the Office and Member States and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The Committee was provided with information that indicated a total current staffing of 40 in the Office of the President of the seventy-first session of the Assembly, including one consultant and two interns.

I.12 Given the recurring nature of the transition process each year, the Advisory Committee is of the view that such support would be most effectively provided by staff who are already familiar with intergovernmental processes and the work of the Office of the President of the General Assembly and that the functions of the proposed P-5 position should be covered from within existing staffing available to the Office. **In the view of the Advisory Committee, the provision of the current capacity, including the established posts by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, is sufficient to meet the needs of the Office in terms of ensuring the transition between successive Presidents. The Committee, therefore, recommends against the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for one new general temporary assistance position at the P-5 level in the Office of the President of the General Assembly. Any related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

I.13 The proposed budget resources would also provide for the overlap period of one month for each of the four positions in the Office of the President of the General Assembly (2 D-2, 1 D-1 and 1 P-5) under section 1. The Advisory Committee notes that the purpose of the one month overlap is to function as a transition period for incoming Presidents. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for resources in relation to the overlap period of one month for each of the four positions (2 D-2, 1 D-1 and 1 P-5) in the Office of the President of the General Assembly.**

Executive Office of the Secretary-General

I.14 The regular budget resources requested for the Executive Office of the Secretary-General amount to $28,901,000 before recosting, representing an increase of $3,372,700, or 13.2 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 revised appropriation. The proposed resources comprise $26,644,100 for 93 posts and $2,256,900 for non-post resources (see A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.86). Section A of annex I to the

budget fascicle shows the organizational structure and post distribution for the Secretary-General and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

I.15 Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with information relating to all posts and positions within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General as at 10 June 2017. The Committee notes that there are currently seven high-level posts at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels on $1-per-year or when-actually-employed appointments within the Organization. The Committee is of the view that greater information and transparency regarding such high-level appointments and support provided from the regular budget is needed and provides its comments and observations on high-level posts in chapter I above.

I.16 The Secretary-General proposes to redeploy the Office of the Spokesperson from section 28, Public information, to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General together with the related resources (see A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.80). The Office of the Spokesperson is responsible, inter alia, for providing information to the news media about the activities of the United Nations as a whole and, in particular, those of the Secretary-General, and the proposed redeployment will ensure successful management and development of media relations on behalf of the Secretary-General (ibid., paras. 1.80 and 1.81). **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the redeployment of the Office of the Spokesperson from section 28, Public information, to section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination.**

I.17 The Secretary-General proposes to establish a Senior Adviser on Policy at the Under-Secretary-General level to support the Secretary-General in maintaining an holistic overview and strategic oversight of policy matters across all pillars of the work of the United Nations, ensuring an integrated approach among the United Nations pillars and leading efforts on system-wide coherence on crisis prevention (ibid., para. 1.83). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that through her/his daily interactions with United Nations senior officials, the Senior Adviser would remain apprised of the main policy thrusts in each pillar and remain engaged with each pillar on a regular basis to ensure that policies are aligned with the vision of the Secretary-General. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a Senior Adviser on Policy at the Under-Secretary-General level.**

I.18 The budget proposal indicates that the functions of the existing post of Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination have been refocused on strategic coordination in accordance with the vision of the Secretary-General so as to support the Executive Office of the Secretary-General with analysis and advice across the political, peacekeeping, development, humanitarian, human rights and rule of law portfolios. The proposed function also oversees and ensures strategic coordination, coherence and integrated information and analysis and provides the secretariat support for the newly established Executive Committee as the primary decision-making forum of the Secretary-General (ibid., paras. 1.71-1.73). Upon enquiring as to the remaining senior-level functions within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Deputy Secretary-General would perform those functions as indicated in General Assembly resolution 52/12 B, with a special focus, inter alia, on sustainable development, while the "outward-looking" role of the Senior Adviser on Policy would complement the "inward-looking" role of the Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination (ibid., para. 1.83). **The Advisory Committee notes the structure of the Executive Office, including the refocusing of the post of the Assistant Secretary-General, and is of the view that synergies should be further encouraged among the various branches of the Office.**

I.19 The Secretary-General proposes to establish one Principal Officer post for the Human Rights Up Front initiative at the D-1 level within the Political, Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Human Rights Unit of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. According to the budget proposal, the Human Rights Up Front initiative is intended to address systemic weaknesses in the efforts by the United Nations to prevent crises and conflict and to bring United Nations development, political, humanitarian and human rights entities together, in shared analysis, discussion, strategizing and decision-making to take coordinated decisions across these pillars to achieve improved prevention (ibid., paras. 1.75 and 1.76). The Advisory Committee was informed that the initiative was established in 2013 under the authority of the previous Secretary-General in response to failings identified in the 2012 report of the Secretary-General's Internal Review Panel on United Nations Action in Sri Lanka.[6]

I.20 The Advisory Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the initiative would continue to be located within the structure of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General as it has been since its establishment in April 2016 as an extrabudgetary funded post. In this regard, the Committee observes that the functional areas of responsibility of the Senior Adviser on Policy appear similar to those of the Principal Officer in terms of the areas of coordination among the three pillars. The Committee notes a possible duplication of functions regarding United Nations preventive action may not allow for a coherent approach in terms of integrating the initiative within the organizational structure as an overarching coordination mechanism. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that greater clarity is needed in terms of the functional areas of the two posts and the operational focus of each in relation to peace and security, development and human rights. The Advisory Committee, therefore, believes it may be premature to establish the post and recommends against its establishment. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Principal Officer post at the D-1 level should be provided through a general temporary assistance position and the related resources reflected under other staff costs as non-post resources accordingly.**

I.21 The Advisory Committee continues to be of the view that while the name of the Human Rights Up Front initiative encapsulates human rights priorities and its function as a preventive mechanism, the name may not fully reflect the intended range of prevention activities. The Committee also observes that as the Secretary-General will submit his reform proposals to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, he may wish to reflect on how the name of the initiative would best encapsulate those reform areas of relevance within the development, peace and

[6] In responses to queries by the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General has referred to the Human Rights Up Front initiative using a number of definitions, including in terms of method, methodology and concept. In particular: (a) in practice the initiative focuses on all three pillars and the overall methods of United Nations action. At the very outset of the initiative, its focus tended towards crisis situations but its methodology of bringing the three pillars together and overcoming silos was clearly beneficial to United Nations action in all situations. It was felt that the United Nations should avoid having procedures for "prevention" that are only applied to crisis situations, and should instead have a general prevention approach that applies to United Nations action at all times. Thus, the initiative increasingly developed into a method for improving United Nations action across all three pillars at all times, not only during a crisis, and especially focused on prevention; and (b) the initiative is not a human rights mechanism and it does not involve any human rights-specific actions or methodology. But it is definitely intended to support better protection of human rights. According to its concept, by ensuring that the United Nations system comes together in a structured manner to consider all three pillars in analysis and to fully include questions of prevention and human rights (including economic, social and cultural rights), the United Nations should be more effective in promoting human rights than when human rights action is pursued on its own.

security and human rights pillars. In this regard, in the foreword to his proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General indicates that the proposed budget does not yet reflect his reform proposals and vision for the Organization, given the timelines for budget preparations and submission. He indicates that at the time of the issuance of the budget proposal, several reform tracks had been initiated, that he had outlined a road map for those efforts in a letter to Member States dated 3 May 2017 and that his reform proposals would be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session (see A/72/6 (Introduction) and Corr.1, Foreword, and Introduction, para. 21).

I.22 **The Advisory Committee looks forward to receiving further information regarding any possible restructuring of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, following the consideration of the General Assembly of the reform proposals of the Secretary-General.** Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

I.23 The Advisory Committee notes from additional information provided by the Secretariat that the proposal under travel of staff in the amount of $1,340,700 reflects a decrease of $87,800. The proposal provides for the cost of travel undertaken by individual staff members at the request of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, travel of the Deputy Secretary-General, staff travelling as part of the immediate party of the Secretary-General and travel of personal aides who are responsible for logistics and administrative support while the Secretary-General is travelling. The Committee notes from additional information provided that the removal of non-recurrent requirements of $199,400 relating to resolutions 71/260 and 71/280 (A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.87) and $86,000 relating to planned efficiencies, were offset by the amount of $197,600 relating to the inward redeployment of non-post resources of the Office of the Spokesperson. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the average size of the delegations of the Secretary-General during 2016 was seven staff of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and 11 staff from other offices and departments within the Secretariat, and the average size during 2017 was three Executive Office staff and seven staff from other offices. The Committee notes that the current size of the delegations has decreased on average from 18 to 10 staff, that resources for staff travel from other offices are reflected under the travel budgets of those respective offices and that extrabudegtary resources have long been used by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to supplement the travel budget of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and Executive Office staff. **The Advisory Committee acknowledges the efforts of the Secretary-General to reduce the size of his delegations and to lead by example in his use of the travel budget of his Office and trusts that any savings will be reflected in the performance reports.**

Office of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva

I.24 The proposed regular budget resources for the Office of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva remain unchanged at $6,196,900 before recosting, compared with the 2016-2017 revised appropriation. The organizational structure and post distribution of the Office of the Director-General are set out in section B of annex I to the budget fascicle.

I.25 The Advisory Committee notes that there are no identified efficiencies resulting in a reduction to the proposed resources for the Office. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that efficiencies had been identified under the fascicle for section 33, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance. **Given the limited savings identified under section 33 for the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the Office of the Director-**

General of the United Nations Office at Geneva should review the approach taken by other offices in reducing travel costs and pursue greater efficiencies.

Office of Administration of Justice

I.26 The proposed regular budget resources for the Office of Administration of Justice amount to $15,529,600 before recosting, reflecting a reduction of $3,239,100, or 17.3 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 revised appropriation. The Secretary-General indicates that the net decrease of $3,239,100 reflects: (a) technical adjustments related to the removal of the non-recurrent resources for the three ad litem judges and related staff (3 P-3, 2 General Service (Other level) and 1 Local level); and (b) decreases reflecting the efficiencies that the Office plans to bring about in 2018-2019. From additional information provided by the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee notes that the decrease is primarily attributable to reductions under:

(a) Other staff costs ($1,422,600), relating to the discontinuation of the non-recurrent provisions for staff supporting the three ad litem judges (3 P-3, 2 General Service (Other level) and 1 Local level), taking into account that the mandate of the ad litem judges expires on 31 December 2017;

(b) Non-staff compensation ($1,626,400), reflecting the discontinuation of non-recurrent requirements related to the ad litem judges in 2016-2017 as the mandate of the ad litem judges expires on 31 December 2017, as well as a reduction in the amount of United Nations Appeals Tribunal honorariums based on the trends in the number of judgments issued by the Tribunal.

I.27 The Advisory Committee notes that although the budget proposal indicates that the reductions result from the discontinuation of non-recurrent requirements related to the three ad litem judges, the Secretary-General will most likely present a proposal for the renewal of that mandate for the consideration of the General Assembly in the main part of the seventy-second session of the Assembly when the mandate of the ad litem judges expires on 31 December 2017. The Committee also notes that the United Nations Appeals Tribunal (as the appellate body reviewing the decisions of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal) consists of seven judges who hold sessions during the year to deliberate on and adjudicate cases (A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.159); the number of sessions depends on the number of cases received; and the caseload is such that the Appeals Tribunal holds three sessions per year (ibid.). In 2016 the Appeals Tribunal received 170 new appeals, disposed of 221 appeals and had 96 appeals pending as at 31 December 2016. The Appeals Tribunal also received 45 interlocutory motions in 2016 (ibid.). As such, the Committee recognizes that in view of the existing workload, although a reduction is proposed in the current budget proposal, an increase to the budget of the Office of Administration of Justice may subsequently ensue following consideration by the General Assembly of the request for a renewal of the judges' mandate. Related comments and observations of the Committee regarding the exclusion of such proposals from the proposed programme budget are made in chapter I above.

I.28 The Advisory Committee notes from the additional information provided by the Secretariat that the proposed resources include a request under consultants in the amount of $15,600 to provide for a software consultant to maintain the website of the Office. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the consultancy, established at the level E fee range, was required for one month. The Committee is not convinced of the need to have a website consultant at this level, given that website maintenance does not usually require a high level of technical expertise that can only be found outside the Organization and that the Office of Information and Communications Technology has the required expertise to provide website

maintenance support for clients. **The Advisory Committee, therefore, recommends against the proposal of the Secretary-General of $15,600 for a website maintenance consultant and encourages the Office of Administration of Justice to seek the support of the Office of Information and Communications Technology for its technology needs.**

Ethics Office

I.29 The proposed regular budget resources for the Ethics Office amount to $3,701,300 before recosting, representing an increase of $157,700, or 4.5 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 revised appropriation. The proposed resources comprise $2,645,600 for nine posts and $1,055,700 for non-post resources (see A/72/6 (Sect. 1), para. 1.191). Section J of the annex to the budget fascicle shows the organizational structure and post distribution for the Ethics Office.

I.30 The Secretary-General indicates that the net increase of $157,700 is attributable to: (a) the proposed establishment of one Legal Officer post (P-4) to implement major improvements pursuant to the provisions of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2017/2 in supporting appeals and reviews of Ethics Office determinations on requests for protection against retaliation, as well as for reviewing cases of and providing advice to staff seeking protection against retaliation, which is offset in part by (b) decreases reflecting the efficiencies that the Office plans to bring about in 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 1.192).

I.31 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the revised whistle-blower protection policy contained in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2017/2 had replaced the former policy (ST/SGB/2005/21) and, taking into account review mechanisms created since the promulgation of the former policy (namely, the United Nations Dispute Tribunal, the United Nations Appeals Tribunal and the Ethics Panel of the United Nations), had added functions, duties and responsibilities involving the responses of the Ethics Office and the Organization regarding determinations concerning cases at the prima facie stage and at the final determination stage, as well as contributions by the Ethics Office to the application of preventative protection measures.[7] The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that a 50 per cent increase in the workload and outreach efforts had already been reported since the promulgation of the new policy on 20 January 2017. The Committee was also provided with a detailed breakdown of the functions and duties of the current staff of the Ethics Office. The Committee notes that of the 11 posts funded through regular budget and other assessed contributions, three Professional level posts provide protection against retaliation functions (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) in addition to the responsibilities of the Director of the Office (D-2) with regard to protection against retaliation. In this regard, the Advisory Committee recalls that the Ethics Office obtained the additional resources of the Senior Ethics Officer (P-5) post under the 2014/15 support account for peacekeeping operations and that the post is currently providing support to the mandate of the Office in dealing with cases involving protection against retaliation.

I.32 The Advisory Committee, moreover, notes that while the Ethics Office makes the initial and final determination of a prima fascia case, the investigation of cases is conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services; that the workload indicators lack clarity in terms of the number of prima fascia cases determined since January 2017 and a baseline for establishing a 50 per cent increase in workload; and the availability of legal knowledge and expertise within the Office as indicated by the

[7] The term "prima facie" may be defined as a case that is supported by sufficient evidence for it to be taken at first sight or as it appears at first without investigation.

number and functions of staff currently dealing with cases involving protection against retaliation cases (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3).

I.33 **While the Advisory Committee notes the intended functions of the proposed post and the issuance of the enhanced whistle-blower protection policy, since the revised policy was only promulgated in January 2017 it is not possible to determine the actual impact on staff or on the Organization, or actual workload needs, resulting from the revised Secretary-General's bulletin. The Committee is of the view that the Ethics Office should provide the General Assembly with regular updates regarding the prima facie caseloads directly resulting from the revised bulletin and that greater efforts should be made to utilize the resources of the Organization in terms of the mediation and conflict resolution capacities of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services prior to cases reaching the level of prima facie determination. Taking into consideration the issues indicated above, the Advisory Committee recommends against the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for one new Legal Officer (P-4) post in the Ethics Office. Any related non-post resources and the corresponding cost under section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, should be adjusted accordingly.**

Section 2
General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$631,101,500
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$624,234,600
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$38,869,500

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

I.34 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 2 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $624,234,600 before recosting, representing a net decrease of $6,866,900, or 1.1 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 2), table 2.3).

I.35 The Secretary-General attributes the net decrease of $6,866,900 to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $12,929,800 relating to the removal of non-recurrent provisions in the biennium 2016-2017 ($13,718,600), offset in part by increased requirements attributable to the biennial provision of five new posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 3 P-3) that were established in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017;

(b) New and expanded mandates: an increase of $15,695,600 relating to: (i) conference management in New York (for details of the conferences and high-level meetings to be serviced, see A/72/6 (Sect. 2), para. 2.10 (a)); (ii) conference management in Geneva, with regard to the status of the human rights treaty body system (A/71/118); resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council during its sessions in 2015 and 2016; nuclear disarmament verification (resolution General Assembly resolution 71/67); transparency in armaments (Assembly resolution 71/44); and the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or

other nuclear explosive devices (Assembly resolution 71/259); and (iii) conference management in Vienna, with regard to the fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice;

(c) Changes within and/or across sections: the establishment of 18 new posts taking into account the delayed impact of resources in the biennium 2020-2021, the reclassification of 26 posts, the redeployment of one post between subprogrammes and the abolishment of 32 posts proposed in the biennium 2018-2019;

(d) Other resource changes: a reduction of $7,139,000, made possible by efficiencies that the Department plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019. The proposed reduction is a result of the efforts of the Department to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

I.36 Extrabudgetary resources for the biennium 2018-2019 are estimated at $38,869,500, derived mostly from reimbursements for services provided for the extrabudgetary activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and United Nations funds and programmes, as well as from contributions towards certain activities in the area of conference services (A/72/6 (Sect. 2), para. 2.22).

I.37 Table I.2 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the proposals of the Secretary-General regarding the regular budget posts for 2018-2019. It also shows the extrabudgetary posts projected for the biennium 2018-2019.

Table I.2
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	1 722	1 USG, 1 ASG, 6 D-2, 19 D-1, 191 P-5, 389 P-4, 385 P-3, 9 P-2, 82 GS (PL), 625 GS (OL) and 14 LL
Proposed for 2018-2019	1 682	1 USG, 1 ASG, 6 D-2, 18 D-1, 204 P-5, 412 P-4, 349 P-3, 9 P-2/1, 83 GS (PL), 585 GS (OL) and 14 LL
New posts	18	1 P-4 and 1 P-3 (executive direction and management) 2 GS (PL) (subprogramme 1, New York) 2 GS (PL) (subprogramme 2, New York) 6 P-5 and 1 P-3 (subprogramme 3, New York) 1 P-3 (subprogramme 2, Geneva) 1 P-5 and 3 P-4 (subprogramme 3, Geneva)
Reclassification	36	19 P-3 to P-4 (subprogramme 3, New York) 6 P-4 to P-5, 3 GS (OL) to GS (PL) (subprogramme 4, New York) 6 P-3 to P-4 (subprogramme 3, Geneva) 1 P-3 to P-4 (subprogramme 2, Nairobi) 1 P-3 to P-4 (subprogramme 4, Nairobi)

	Posts	*Level*
Abolishments	(58)	1 P-4 (subprogramme 1, New York)
		1 GS (OL) (subprogramme 2, New York)
		1 D-1, 1 P-4, 12 P-3, 6 GS (PL) and 5 GS (OL) (subprogramme 3, New York)
		11 GS (OL) (subprogramme 4, New York)
		1 GS (OL) (programme support, New York)
		4 GS (OL) (subprogramme 2, Geneva)
		13 GS (OL) (subprogramme 3, Geneva)
		2 GS (OL) (subprogramme 4, Geneva)
Redeployments	1	1 GS (PL) from subprogramme 3 to subprogramme 4 (Geneva)
Jointly financed budget (Vienna)[a]		
Approved for 2016-2017	174	1 D-1, 20 P-5, 43 P-4, 25 P-3, 6 GS (PL) and 79 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	181	1 D-1, 20 P-5, 43 P-4, 25 P-3, 6 GS (PL) and 86 GS (OL)
Conversion from temporary assistance for meetings	8	3 GS (OL) (subprogramme 2)
		4 GS (OL) (subprogramme 3)
		1 GS (OL) (subprogramme 4)
Abolishment		1 GS (OL) (subprogramme 2)
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	90	1 D-1, 2 P-5, 7 P-4/3, 1 GS (PL), 4 GS (OL) and 75 LL

[a] Under conference management, Vienna, in addition to the programme budget, 174 posts in the biennium 2016-2017 and 181 posts in the biennium 2018-2019 are financed on a cost-shared basis. The post composition is detailed in tables 2.38 and 2.61 of the budget fascicle.

Comments and recommendations on posts

I.38 As shown in table I.2, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 1,682 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, representing a net reduction of 40 posts when compared with the total number of posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017, comprising the proposed establishment of 18 new posts, the reclassification of 36 posts, the abolishment of 58 posts and the redeployment of one post.

New posts

I.39 A total of 18 posts (7 P-5, 4 P-4, 3 P-3 and 4 General Service (Principal level) are proposed to be established as indicated below:

(a) Two posts under executive direction and management, New York: one post of Public Information and Multilingualism Officer (P-4), to support the Under-Secretary-General in the delivery of her mandates as the Coordinator for Multilingualism, in line with General Assembly resolutions 69/324 and 70/9; and one post of Communication Officer (P-3), to be responsible for the content and format of the Department's communications strategy and maintain the departmental websites related to the language outreach tools in support of the multilingualism and outreach functions of the Under-Secretary-General (see A/72/6 (Sect. 2), para. 2.41);

(b) Two posts under subprogramme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs, New York: two General Service (Principal level) posts of Senior Meetings Services Assistants in the Disarmament and Peace Affairs Branch and the Economic and Social Council Affairs Branch of the Department to provide for assistance with the coordination of organizational arrangements for meetings, formatting, editing and submission of documents, coordinating voting arrangements,

updating public websites, drafting correspondence and responding to queries from delegations and Secretariat staff (ibid., para. 2.50 (b));

(c) Two posts under subprogramme 2, Planning and coordination of conference services, New York: two Senior Meetings Services Assistant (General Service (Principal level) posts, one each in the Meetings Management Section and the Management Support Section, to augment the capacity to service an increased number of meetings (ibid., para. 2.56 (a));

(d) Seven posts under subprogramme 3, Documentation services, New York: one post of Computational Linguist (P-3) in the Office of the Director, and six posts of Senior Reviser/Project Manager (P-5) in the Translation Services (ibid., para. 2.64);

(e) One post under subprogramme 2, Geneva: one post of Programme Management Officer (P-3) to provide direct professional support to the Chief of the Central Planning and Coordination Service (ibid., para. 2.83 (a));

(f) Four posts under subprogramme 3, Documentation services, Geneva: one Senior Change Management Officer (P-5) post in the Office of the Chief of the Languages Service and three Reviser (P-4) posts in the Spanish Translation Section (ibid., para. 2.91).

I.40 Concerning the establishment of the post of Communication Officer (P-3) under executive direction and management, New York, the Advisory Committee is of the view that there are insufficient workload indicators regarding the support required for the Department's communications strategy and that further information regarding the actual workload associated with the additional communications needs of the Department is necessary. **The Advisory Committee, therefore, recommends against the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for one new post of Communication Officer (P-3) and recommends its approval as a general temporary assistance position at this stage.**

I.41 Concerning the post of Senior Change Management Officer (P-5) in the Office of the Chief of the Languages Service under subprogramme 3, Geneva, the Advisory Committee was provided with additional information, upon request, concerning the functions of the post and notes that the focus of the post is to lead and coordinate change management programmes, support increasing technological change and lead workflow improvements. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that these functions should be spearheaded and coordinated under executive direction and management in New York and that, as such, the proposal for the post is not justified. The Advisory Committee recommends against the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for the new post of Senior Change Management Officer (P-5) in the Office of the Chief of the Languages Service under subprogramme 3, Documentation services, Geneva. Any related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

I.42 Concerning the post of Public Information and Multilingualism Officer (P-4) to support the Under-Secretary-General in the delivery of her mandates as the Coordinator for Multilingualism, the Advisory Committee was provided, upon request, with information relating to the outreach and communications functions of the post as well as the policy guidance and advocacy support necessary to support the network of multilingualism focal points throughout the Organization. **The Advisory Committee notes the importance of multilingualism in the activities of the United Nations and recommends the approval of the post of Public Information and Multilingualism Officer (P-4).**

Reclassification of posts

I.43 A total of 36 posts are proposed for upward reclassification, as indicated in table I.2, which shows that the proposed reclassifications are related mostly to the reorganization of the Translation Services and to the rationalization of the text processing, referencing and editing functions.

Redeployments

I.44 As shown in table I.2, it is proposed to redeploy one General Service (Principal level) post from subprogramme 3 to subprogramme 4, Publishing services, in Geneva.

Abolishments

I.45 A total of 58 posts are proposed to be abolished as indicated below:

(a) **Conference management, New York**. A total of 39 posts are proposed for abolishment comprising: (i) one Intergovernmental Affairs Officer (P-4) in the Economic and Social Council Affairs Branch under subprogramme 1 (A/72/6 (Sect. 2), para. 2.50); (ii) one Programme Management Assistant (General Service (Other level)) in the Management Support Section under subprogramme 2 (ibid., para. 2.56); (iii) 25 posts under subprogramme 3: one Chief of Service (D-1), one Terminologist (P-4), one Administrative Officer (P-3), one Editor (P-3), six Senior Language Reference Assistants (General Service (Principal level)), three Language Reference Assistants (General Service (Other level)) and two Editorial Assistants (General Service (Other level)) in the Editorial Service; and 10 Translators (P-3) in the Translation Services (ibid., para. 2.64 (b) and (c)); (iv) 11 General Service (Other level) posts in the Meetings Support Section under subprogramme 4: two posts of Meeting Services Assistant, two posts of Graphic Design Assistant, six posts of Desktop Publishing Assistant and one post of Publishing Assistant (ibid., para. 2.71 (b) and (c)); and (v) one Administrative Assistant post (General Service (Other level)) in the Executive Office under programme support;

(b) **Conference management, Geneva**. A total of 19 posts are proposed for abolishment comprising: (i) four General Service (Other level) posts under subprogramme 2: three Documents Management Assistant posts in the Documents Management Section and one Accounting Clerk post in the Office of Director (ibid., para. 2.83 (b)); (ii) 13 General Service (Other level) posts under subprogramme 3: four Text-Processing Clerks in the Text-Processing Unit, two Editorial Assistants in the Editing Section, two Information Systems Assistants in the Office of the Chief of the Languages Service, one Administrative Assistant in the Text-Processing Section, one Team Assistant in the Editing Section, one Information Systems Assistant in the Text-Processing Section and two Desktop Editorial Assistants in the Text-Processing Section (ibid., para. 2.91 (b) and (c)); and (iii) two General Service (Other level) posts under subprogramme 4: one Staff Assistant post in the Printing Section and one Publishing Assistant post in the Printing Section (ibid., para. 2.97 (a)).

Restructuring of the Translation Services in New York

I.46 The budget proposal indicates that to achieve quality and increased productivity in a cost-neutral manner a change of paradigm will be required in translation working methods from translation-revision (performed by a translator and a reviser) to self-revision (performed by a self-reviser or a reviser). Accordingly, a restructuring strategy for the Department is proposed, including reorganizing the Translation Services (ibid., paras. 2.17-2.19), with the resulting

changes in post requirements as indicated in the budget proposal (ibid., table 2.2). Specifically, it is proposed to retain fewer Translators (P-3), whose work requires close supervision, and have more Revisers (P-4) and Senior Revisers (P-5), who are qualified to self-revise their own drafts and assure quality control for external translation. The proposed increase in the number of Reviser (P-4) posts would be beneficial to the production goals, as these staff will be self-sufficient since their work will not require input by a Reviser, as compared with the current Translator (P-3) posts, whose work requires review. The proposal also indicates that this change has been made possible as a result of the introduction of the proprietary translation technologies for automated translation (including eLUNa and gText) and that self-revision is more cost-effective than translation and revision, while increasing timely delivery (ibid., para. 2.17).

I.47 In this regard, the Advisory Committee considers that a number of issues need further consideration by the Department in terms of evaluating its current approach to the reorganization of the Translation Services and in further developing the strategy for its roll-out to the other duty stations. Among other things, the Department has faced challenges in ensuring continuity and smooth succession, given the high number of staff reaching retirement age, as well as other specific challenges in ensuring full capacity in the documentation, translation and interpretation services and establishing measures to cover its succession needs. In this regard, the Committee notes that the increase in the number of P-4 and P-5 posts by 23 and 13 posts, respectively, together with the proposed reduction of 36 P-3 posts, could have further implications for workforce planning and succession planning within the Department, and considers that the Department will need to carefully integrate the reduction of the P-3 posts into its workforce planning and efforts to cover the succession needs of the Department.

I.48 The budget proposal also indicates that achieving quality production is an objective of the change to the translation working methods. While the Committee acknowledges the importance of quality documentation and the steps taken to ensure the quality control of translations, it nevertheless considers that there is a need to ensure that the quality of translated documents remains at a consistently high level even with the increasing use of automated translation and editing tools and with translators simultaneously becoming self-revisers at the P-4 level. The Secretary-General proposes that the Senior Revisers at the P-5 level should have increased responsibilities with regard to quality control for internal and external production, and that the increased in-house revision of contractually translated documents will be facilitated by a common computer-assisted translation and global terminology platform (gText) accessible to external contractors. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Department should ensure that the functions of Senior Revisers (P-5) include providing quality assurance of all documents, particularly those of a complicated nature requiring a greater level of control and revision. The Committee is also of the view that self-sufficiency may be attained while ensuring that the essential role of the Revisers in assuring the necessary quality levels, as well as the checks and balances in the translation process, is maintained.**

I.49 The budget proposal indicates that the reorganization of the Translation Services would be implemented in a phased manner, taking advantage of supporting future technology improvements (A/72/6 (Sect. 2), para. 2.18). The proposal also indicates that the text processing, referencing and editing functions will be rationalized to reflect benefits accruing from the consolidation of translation and editorial support services and that technology platforms (in particular eLUNa and other components of gText), which have made possible economies of scale and efficiency gains in translation and the related support functions, will be increasingly

integrated (ibid., para. 2.17). **The Advisory Committee recognizes the efforts made by the Department in reorganizing the Translation Services and in leveraging the translation and editorial technologies of eLUNa and gText indicated in the budget proposal. The Committee is of the view that implementing the proposed reorganization in a phased manner, initially limited to Headquarters, will allow for a complete assessment of the impact on the Translation Services, on other related services provision and on the Department as a whole. The Committee is also of the view that the impact assessment would form the basis from which to draw lessons learned and adapt the reorganizational approach, as necessary, to the requirements of other locations prior to its roll-out.**

Workload indicators for the Translation Services

I.50 The Advisory Committee was provided with information, upon enquiry, relating to the distribution of posts in the Translation Services, as indicated in table I.3.

Table I.3
Translation post requirements

	P-5		*P-4*		*P-3*	
Language	*Approved 2016-2017*	*Proposed 2018-2019*	*Approved 2016-2017*	*Proposed 2018-2019*	*Approved 2016-2017*	*Proposed 2018-2019*
New York						
Arabic	11	12	25	27	26	20
Chinese	11	12	31	31	22	20
English	6	6	10	11	9	8
French	12	12	24	27	26	20
Russian	9	12	21	27	28	20
Spanish	11	12	21	27	25	19
Total	**60**	**66**	**132**	**150**	**136**	**107**
Geneva						
Arabic	4	4	8	9	12	11
Chinese	4	4	8	9	9	8
English	4	4	9	9	11	11
French	6	6	14	16	18	16
Russian	6	6	16	15	13	13
Spanish	5	5	9	13	12	12
Total	**29**	**29**	**64**	**71**	**75**	**71**
Nairobi						
Arabic	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese	1	1	1	1	1	1
English	1	1	2	2	2	2
French	1	1	1	1	2	2
Russian	1	1	1	1	–	–
Spanish	–	–	2	2	1	1
Total	**5**	**5**	**8**	**8**	**7**	**7**

Language	P-5		P-4		P-3	
	Approved 2016-2017	*Proposed 2018-2019*	*Approved 2016-2017*	*Proposed 2018-2019*	*Approved 2016-2017*	*Proposed 2018-2019*
Vienna						
Arabic	2	2	3	3	2	2
Chinese	2	2	3	3	2	2
English	1	1	1	1	1	1
French	2	2	5	5	3	3
Russian	2	2	3	3	2	2
Spanish	2	2	5	5	3	3
Total	**11**	**11**	**20**	**20**	**13**	**13**

I.51 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with additional information relating to the significant workload indicators for all four duty stations and all six official languages, with a breakdown of actual and estimated workload indicators for 2016 and 2017, respectively (see table I.4). The Committee notes the inconsistencies in the information provided to justify a proposed reduction of a post in one of the Translation Services. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretariat will provide the required information on this matter to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the 2018-2019 biennium.**

I.52 The Advisory Committee was provided with additional information, upon request, relating to the five-year productivity trends as reflected in table I.4 below.

Table I.4
Five-year productivity trends
(Words per staff member per day)

Duty station	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
Translation					
New York	1 530	1 596	1 506	1 656	1 743
Geneva	1 566	1 533	1 468	1 645	1 741
Vienna	1 429	1 492	1 551	1 725	1 798
Nairobi	1 590	1 449	1 505	1 346	1 340
Editing					
New York	4 415	4 739	4 075	5 513	3 975
Geneva	6 865	6 053	5 069	5 016	2 440
Vienna	2 075	3 247	2 640	3 765	3 521
Nairobi	4 456	6 239	4 059	4 349	4 742
Text-processing					
New York	4 214	4 402	3 326	6 243	6 880
Geneva	7 205	8 145	4 460	5 009	5 804
Vienna	4 442	4 206	4 224	4 488	5 115
Nairobi	3 178	2 944	2 244	2 937	3 267

I.53 **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should provide information regarding productivity trends in future budget submissions**

as well as an analysis of the adjustment in resources resulting from changes in productivity.

I.54 **Subject to paragraphs I.40 and I.41 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for post resources in section 2.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

I.55 The proposed non-post resources for the biennium 2018-2019 for section 2 amount to $138,433,400 before recosting, reflecting an increase of $441,000, or 0.3 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 resources at revised rates.

I.56 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraph I.41 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for non-post resources.**

General comments and recommendations

Interpretation services

I.57 The budget proposal provides for language interpretation services to meetings under subprogramme 2 at the four duty stations. **In view of the need for ensuring the equal treatment of all official languages and the need for consistent budgeting, ensuring full transparency and analysis of the interpretation workload, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly may wish to commence a practice of approving the posts of interpreters at each of the four duty stations with a breakdown not only by grade, but also by language, in a similar manner to the approval for the posts of translators.**

Part II
Political affairs

Section 3
Political affairs

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$1,346,045,300
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$1,225,058,400
Other assessed resources	$15,674,600[a]
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$93,056,800

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

II.1 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 3 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $1,225,058,400 before recosting, representing a decrease of $120,986,900, or 9 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017. The resources proposed for section 3 include the requirements for the Department of Political Affairs ($85,568,400), special political missions ($1,109,612,900), the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process ($16,895,300), the Peacebuilding Support Office ($5,792,300), the Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory ($5,232,400) and the United Nations Office to the African Union ($1,957,100) (see A/72/6 (Sect. 3) table 3.3).

II.2 The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, by its resolution 71/291, decided to establish the Office of Counter-Terrorism, to be headed by an Under-Secretary-General, and agreed to transfer the current Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, together with their existing staff and associated resources, out of the Department of Political Affairs and into the newly created Office. In his report on revised estimates relating to the Office of Counter-Terrorism (A/72/117), the Secretary-General indicates that, owing to the timing of the adoption of resolution 71/291, the regular budget resources proposed for section 3 do not reflect the additional resources required for the Office, which are set out in the report of the Secretary-General. Further comments and recommendations on the revised estimates relating to that Office are to be provided in a separate report of the Committee, to be issued under the symbol A/72/7/Add.1.

II.3 The Secretary-General attributes the net decrease in resource requirements to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $105,246,800, reflecting the discontinuation of the following non-recurrent provisions: (i) $104,991,900 for special political missions; (ii) $24,400 for the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; and (iii) $580,500 for the Peacebuilding Support Office, offset by an increase of $350,000, mainly for the biennial provision for nine new posts in the Department of Political Affairs that were established in 2016-2017 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248 C (ibid., paras. 3.9 and 3.10);

(b) Changes within or across sections, including the redeployment of $185,100 from executive direction and management and subprogrammes 3, Security Council affairs, and 6, Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, to subprogrammes 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and 2, Electoral assistance, and to programme support, mainly as a result of the redeployment of resources under travel of staff and consultants (ibid., para. 3.14);

(c) Other changes, including a net decrease of $15,740,100, comprising a reduction of $15,839,600 resulting from efforts of the entities under section 3 to apply the anticipated Umoja-related efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations, offset in part by resource requirements relating to the proposed reclassification of six posts of Close Protection Officer (Security Service) as Field Service posts in the Office of the Special Coordinator. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they are to be achieved and the extent to which they can be considered efficiencies. Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are included in chapter I above.

II.4 The Secretary-General's proposal also includes estimated requirements for special political missions in the amount of $1,109,612,900, which the Advisory Committee notes is $14,787,100 less than the amount provided in the proposed programme budget outline for 2018-2019. The Committee's comments and observations on this matter are included in chapter I above.

II.5 The regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019 are summarized in table II.1, along with the extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019 (ibid., tables 3.2 and 3.4).

Table II.1
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Established regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	376	3 USG, 3 ASG, 13 D-2, 16 D-1, 48 P-5, 64 P-4, 52 P-3, 22 P-2/1, 5 GS (PL), 100 GS (OL), 6 SS, 7 FS, 32 LL and 5 NPO
Reclassification	–	6 SS to FS in the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
		1 FS to LL in the Office of the Special Coordinator
Abolishment	(3)	1 P-5 in the Office of the Special Coordinator,
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 2, Electoral assistance and
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 3, Security Council affairs
Proposed for 2018-2019	373	3 USG, 3 ASG, 13 D-2, 16 D-1, 47 P-5, 64 P-4, 52 P-3, 22 P-2/1, 5 GS (PL), 98 GS (OL), 12 FS, 33 LL and 5 NPO
Other assessed[a]		
Approved for 2016-2017	50	2 D-1, 2 P-5, 23 P-4/P-3, 14 LL, 8 FS and 1 NPO
Proposed for 2018-2019	50	2 D-1, 2 P-5, 23 P-4/P-3, 14 LL, 8 FS and 1 NPO
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	94	3 D-1, 11 P-5, 51 P-4/P-3, 4 P-2/P-1, 1 GS (PL), 21 GS (OL), 2 LL and 1 NPO

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

Comments and recommendations on posts

II.6 As shown in table II.1, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 373 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, representing a net reduction of 3 posts compared with the total number approved for 2016-2017, which are proposed for abolishment.

Abolishments

II.7 As indicated in table II.1, the Secretary-General proposes the abolishment of three posts (1 P-5 and 2 General Service (Other level)). One post of Chief of Mission Support (P-5) is proposed to be abolished in the Office of the Special Coordinator given the co-location of the office with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Jerusalem, with the aim of improving synergies and maximizing efficiency gains. The two entities have determined that the Chief of Mission Support (D-1) of UNTSO will also serve as the Chief of Mission Support for the Office of the Special Coordinator. One post of Office Assistant (General Service (Other level)) is proposed for abolishment under subprogramme 2, reflecting the anticipated efficiencies the Electoral Assistance Division plans to bring about in 2018-2019 with respect to the organization of meetings and conferences. One post of Meeting Services Assistant (General Service (Other level)) is proposed for abolishment under subprogramme 3, reflecting the anticipated efficiencies the Security Council Affairs Division plans to bring about in 2018-2019 through the automation of certain data collection functions.

II.8 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that six posts established under the programme budget (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 General Service (Other level)) and the existing 32 posts and positions funded from the counter-terrorism implementation trust fund would be transferred to the newly established Office of Counter-Terrorism, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/291. It was further informed that the three posts (2 P-3 and 1 General Service (Principal level)) located within the Executive Office of the Department and funded from the counter-terrorism implementation trust fund to provide administrative support to the management of the trust fund would remain in the Executive Office (see para. II.2).

II.9 The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for post resources.

Comments and recommendation on non-post resources

II.10 The supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee reflects the non-post resources proposed for the biennium 2018-2019 in the amount of $1,120,740,200, reflecting a net decrease of $121,889,700, or 9.8 per cent, compared with 2016-2017 resources. The amount includes a provision for special political missions of $1,109,612,900, the annual budget proposals for which will be considered in late 2017 and 2018 (see chap. I for related comments in this regard).

Consultants

II.11 The supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that the amount of $127,600, reflecting a decrease of $8,944,500, or 98.6 per cent, compared with the previous period, provides for specialized consultancy services not available in-house for assessment missions and interdepartmental task forces on issues such as border conflicts, conflict prevention and specialized expertise for studies on lessons learned in connection with political missions. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed of the number of consultants and contractors in terms of full-year equivalent for the bienniums 2016-2017 and 2018-2019. The Committee notes that under subprogramme 5, Question of Palestine, one senior-level consultant

is proposed for the migration and integration of content to a new website recently developed by the Department of Public Information. **The Advisory Committee considers that the proposed level of all consultancies should be commensurate with the requirements of the specific scope of work.** Further comments and recommendations of the Committee are included in chapter I above.

Contractual services

II.12 The supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that an amount of $2,012,300, reflecting a decrease of $54,586,600, or 96.4 per cent, is proposed for contractual services for 2018-2019. The proposed requirements for the biennium under subprogramme 3, Security Council affairs, for contractual services amount to $55,800 before recosting, reflecting an increase of $5,000 for the provision of refreshments during familiarization sessions for new members of the Security Council on the procedures, practices and working methods of the Council and its subsidiary organs. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that this activity was not envisaged in 2015 when the budget for 2016-2017 had been finalized. It was further informed, however, that owing to positive feedback from the inaugural 2016 workshop for incoming Security Council members, the Department of Political Affairs was proposing to include new resources in order to organize this activity on a regular basis. **In view of the recurrent nature of the Security Council workshops and given that such resource requirements were never previously included in budget proposals, the Advisory Committee recommends against the inclusion of funds for this purpose in the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019.**

II.13 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraph II.12 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Section 4
Disarmament

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$24,868,900
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$25,561,900
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$25,042,500

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

II.14 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 4 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $25,561,900 before recosting, representing an increase of $693,000, or 2.8 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 4), table 4.3).

II.15 The Secretary-General attributes this net increase to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $883,000 reflecting the discontinuation of non-recurrent provisions for developments in the field of information and telecommunications technology in the context of international security ($756,000) and for the phased abolition of one post (General Service (Other level)) in 2016-2017 ($127,000), which was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/247 (ibid., para. 4.10);

(b) New and expanded mandates: resources in the amount of $1,955,600 are provided to cover the cost of United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) staff so as to ensure the Institute's operational sustainability and independence, in line with General Assembly resolution 70/69, and to fund a new mandate in relation to the convening of a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, pursuant to Assembly resolution 71/67 (ibid., para. 4.11);

(c) Changes within or across sections: the proposal reflects the redeployment of one post of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) from executive direction and management to subprogramme 2, Weapons of mass destruction, and one post of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) from the Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch to the Vienna office under subprogramme 5, Regional disarmament (ibid., para. 4.12);

(d) Other changes: resource changes reflect a reduction of $315,900 resulting from efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs to apply the anticipated Umoja-related efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390), to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they are to be achieved and the extent to which they can be considered efficiencies. Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are included in chapter I above.

II.16 The regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019 are summarized in table II.2, along with the extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019 (ibid., tables 4.2 and 4.4).

Table II.2
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	60	1 USG, 2 D-2, 3 D-1, 13 P-5, 8 P-4, 7 P-3, 4 P-2/1, 4 GS (PL), 14 GS (OL) and 4 LL
Redeployments		1 P-5 from executive direction and management to subprogramme 2 and 1 P-5 from subprogramme 2 to subprogramme 5
Proposed for 2018-2019	60	1 USG, 2 D-2, 3 D-1, 13 P-5, 8 P-4, 7 P-3, 4 P-2/1, 4 GS (PL), 14 GS (OL) and 4 LL
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	4	2 P-4 and 2 GS (OL)

Comments and recommendations on posts

II.17 As shown in table II.2, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 60 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, representing no change in the number of posts in comparison with the total number of posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017.

II.18 Paragraphs 4.33 and 4.48 of the budget fascicle explain the proposed redeployments of: (a) one post of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) from subprogramme 2, Weapons of mass destruction, to Vienna under subprogramme 5, Regional disarmament, in order to strengthen the capacity of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in Vienna and its ability to coordinate and cooperate with Vienna-based international organizations, specialized agencies and other entities;

and (b) one post of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) from executive direction and management to the Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch.

II.19 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that a P-5 post, funded from extrabudgetary contributions, had been located in Vienna prior to 2016. Since funding for the post was not continued, the Controller granted permission, on 4 February 2016, for the redeployment of an existing P-5 regular budget post from New York to Vienna on a temporary basis in order to ensure the performance of required functions. The proposed redeployment of a regular budget P-5 post to Vienna is intended to ensure continuity of the required functions over the long term. In this connection, the Committee was informed that there was currently no General Assembly resolution or decision relating to the redeployment of the P-5 post to Vienna, or, more generally, to the performance of a component of the Office's programme of work in that location. **Given the absence of an Assembly decision on the establishment of an office of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in Vienna and the need for sufficient substantiation and justification pertaining to the activities of the Office, the Advisory Committee recommends, at this stage, against the proposed redeployment of the two P-5 posts and recommends that the posts remain in their originally approved locations.**

II.20 **The Advisory Committee trusts that in the future, regular budget resources will not be used for purposes other than those approved by the General Assembly.**

II.21 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for post resources, subject to its comments in paragraph II.19 above.**

Comments and recommendation on non-post resources

II.22 The Secretary-General proposes non-post resources for the biennium 2018-2019 in the amount of $7,838,600, reflecting a net increase of $883,700, or 12.7 per cent, compared with 2016-2017 resources. As indicated in paragraph II.17 (b), the proposed increase includes the amount of $1,955,600, primarily under grants and contributions, to cover the cost of UNIDIR staff and costs for convening a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

II.23 The provision of $3.5 million under grants and contributions represents an increase of $1.5 million, or 77 per cent, compared with the approved resources for the biennium 2016-2017. The net increase would cover the cost of UNIDIR staff to ensure the Institute's operational sustainability and independence, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/69, and, in line with previous practice, to fund a portion of the institutional costs of UNIDIR from regular budget resources under section 4. The Assembly, in paragraph 9 of its resolution 70/69, requested the Secretary-General, as an exceptional, one-off measure, to preserve the future of the Institute and, without setting a precedent, to submit, in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, a funding proposal taking into account additional resources in the light of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/70/186).

II.24 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increase of $1.5 million was a one-time measure that covered the cost of three Professional posts (1 D-1, 1 P-5 and 1 P-3) and 1 General Service (Other level) post for the biennium 2018-2019. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the

one-time measure included a provision of $300,000 for the completion of an independent assessment on the future structural, financial, administrative and operational aspects of the Institute, outlining a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model as required to achieve the Institute's mandate and objectives beyond the biennium 2018-2019. The Committee notes that the total amount of funds made available for the independent assessment represents nearly 20 per cent of the one-time subvention for 2018-2019 and 55 per cent compared with the total appropriation for 2016-2017. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the assessment should commence in mid-January 2018, subject to the provision of necessary funding. It was further informed that the assessment would be conducted over roughly a three-month period, from mid-January to mid- to late April 2018, but it was not provided with further detail on the monthly cost of the potential vendor or the scope of the work to be completed in the limited time available. The Committee also notes that the funds for the independent assessment and selection of the vendor will be administered by the United Nations Office at Geneva. **Given the justification and the limited detail provided on the scope of the independent assessment and the nature of the individual or entity undertaking it, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed additional funds dedicated to the independent assessment be reduced by $100,000 and the total amount of the UNIDIR subvention for the biennium 2018-2019 be adjusted accordingly.**

Hospitality

II.25 The proposed requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 on hospitality amount to $15,800 before recosting, reflecting a 172 per cent increase in resources compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017. The Secretary-General indicates that an increase of $10,000 for the biennium is due to the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament secretariat and Conference Support Branch in Geneva in covering the meetings of the group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, the meetings of the Conference on Disarmament and outreach activities. **Given the insufficient justification for the increase, the Advisory Committee recommends a $5,800 reduction in the proposed budget for hospitality for the biennium 2018-2019.**

II.26 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs II.24 and II.25 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Section 5
Peacekeeping operations

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$109,648,400
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$105,338,000
Other assessed resources	$191,770,100[a]
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$117,873,100

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

II.27 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 5 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $105,338,000 before recosting, representing a decrease of $4,310,400, or 3.9 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017. The resources proposed for section 5 include the requirements for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations ($10,478,100), the Department of Field Support ($8,251,500), UNTSO ($67,190,500) and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) ($19,417,900) (see A/72/6 (Sect. 5), table 5.3).

II.28 The Secretary-General attributes this net decrease to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $2,536,900 relating to the refurbishment of the new headquarters of the UNMOGIP; an increase of $151,000 relating to the biennial provision of one new P-4 post that was established in 2016-2017 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/247 in support of UNTSO; and a decrease of $222,300 relating to the phased abolishment of one P-4 post in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 2016-2017 (ibid., para. 5.15);

(b) Changes within or across sections: the decrease of $254,300 reflecting a redeployment/redistribution of resources within the section, including the proposed abolishment of four posts (2 Field Service and 2 Local level), the downward reclassification of four Field Service posts to the Local level and the establishment of two new posts (1 P-3 and 1 Field Service) for UNTSO in the biennium 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 5.16);

(c) Other changes: resource changes reflecting a reduction of $1,447,900, made possible as a result of the efforts of the entities to apply the anticipated Umoja-related efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations (ibid., para. 5.17). During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they are to be achieved and the extent to which they can be considered efficiencies. Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are included in chapter I above.

II.29 The regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019 are summarized in table II.3, along with the other assessed and extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019 (ibid., tables 5.2 and 5.4).

Table II.3
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Regular budget[a]		
Approved for 2016-2017	374	2 USG, 5 ASG, 6 D-2, 7 D-1, 9 P-5, 6 P-4, 7 P-3, 9 P-2/1, 19 GS (OL), 200 LL, 102 FS and 2 NPO
New posts	2	1 P-3 and 1 FS under UNTSO
Reclassification	–	5 FS to LL under UNTSO
Redeployment	–	7 FS, 1 NPO and 24 LL within UNTSO
Abolishment	(9)	1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 5 and 3 FS and 5 LL under UNTSO
Proposed for 2018-2019	367	2 USG, 5 ASG, 6 D-2, 7 D-1, 9 P-5, 6 P-4, 8 P-3, 9 P-2/1, 18 GS (OL), 200 LL, 95 FS and 2 NPO
Other assessed[a]		
Approved for 2016-2017	856	8 D-2, 23 D-1, 85 P-5, 479 P-4/3, 14 P-2/1, 20 GS (PL) and 230 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	856	8 D-2, 23 D-1, 85 P-5, 479 P-4/3, 14 P-2/1, 20 GS (PL) and 230 GS (OL)
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	62	7 P-5, 36 P-4/3, 1 GS (PL) and 18 GS (OL)

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

Comments and recommendations on posts

II.30 As shown in table II.3, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 367 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, representing a net reduction of 7 posts compared with the number approved for the biennium 2016-2017, comprising the abolishment of 9 posts and the establishment of 2 posts.

New posts

II.31 The proposed establishment of two new posts (1 Information Analyst (P-3) and 1 Fixed Asset Management Officer (Field Service)) in UNTSO (ibid., para. 5.94) is explained in the budget fascicle. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed posts would strengthen integrated mission analytical and reporting capacity and asset management capacity, in line with the recommendations of a civilian staffing review conducted with respect to this mission. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the post of Information Analyst (P-3) was needed to provide improved capacity to understand regional dynamics across the area of operation, including from regional partners and Headquarters, particularly in view of the volatile regional environment, and to enable the Head of Mission to most effectively direct and implement the mission's regional liaison and assessment activities.

Abolishments

II.32 The Advisory Committee recalls its consideration of the Secretary-General's latest report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/71/365), in which the Secretary-General noted that with the implementation in November 2016 of Umoja Extension 1 for national staff and uniformed personnel in field missions (known as cluster 5), the rigour and interdependencies that will be introduced may make it difficult for individual field missions and other United Nations offices to sustain payroll functions. Consequently, payroll-processing functions were consolidated in two locations as

from 1 November 2016, with payroll for national staff and individual uniformed personnel in missions based in Africa processed by the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and payroll for all other missions (except for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Mission in Colombia) processed by the Kuwait Joint Support Office. At the time of its consideration of that report, the Committee did not object to the redistribution of mission finance positions from peacekeeping and regular budget missions to the Kuwait Joint Support Office as an interim arrangement to support the implementation of Umoja, recalling that any changes to the existing and future service delivery model must be approved by the Assembly, in accordance with its resolution 70/248 A. The Committee also recalls its recommendation, endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 71/272 A, that the Secretary-General provide a full analysis of costs and benefits, both qualitative and quantitative, of the Kuwait Joint Support Office (A/71/595, paras. 52-55).

II.33 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the General Assembly had since approved budgets for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) that included the abolishment of one Payroll Assistant post in each of the missions, followed by the proposal contained in the proposed programme budget for biennium 2018-2019 to abolish another such post, effective January 2018, for a total of three abolishments as part of this initiative. The Committee was provided, upon request, with the proposed staffing of payroll support for the missions serviced by the Kuwait Joint Support Office and the related post abolishments and transfers (see table II.4).

Table II.4
Kuwait Joint Support Office staffing for payroll functions (as from 1 January 2018)

Mission	*Type of post*	*Abolishment*	*Transfer to Kuwait Joint Support Office*
UNIFIL	International		Budget Finance Officer: 1 P-3
	National	Finance and Budget Assistant: 1 LL	Finance and Budget Assistant: 2 LL
United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy	National		Finance and Budget Assistant: 2 LL
United Nations Disengagement Observer Force	National		Finance Assistant: 1 LL
UNFICYP	National	Finance Assistant: 1 LL	Finance and Budget Assistant: 1 LL
United Nations Mission in Kosovo	International		Finance Assistant: 1 FS
	National		Finance Assistant: 1 LL
UNTSO[a]	National	Finance Assistant: 1 LL	Finance Assistant: 1 GS
UNMOGIP[a]	National		Finance Assistant: 1 LL

[a] Proposed in A/72/6 (Sect. 5).

The Advisory Committee was also provided with information indicating that the 11 new payroll-related posts identified in table II.4 would join an existing pool of seven positions based at the Kuwait Joint Support Office providing payroll services.

II.34 It is indicated in the budget fascicle that as part of this larger initiative to centralize payroll processing, a change in the location of payroll functions for both UNTSO and UNMOGIP is proposed effective January 2018, resulting in a redistribution of finance staff from the two missions. Taking into account the changes in workload of the finance sections in the Kuwait Joint Support Office, UNTSO and UNMOGIP, the Secretary-General proposes that 1 Finance Assistant (Local level) from both UNTSO and UNMOGIP be relocated to the Kuwait Joint Support Office (A/72/6 (Sect. 5), paras. 5.95 and 5.100). The Advisory Committee notes, on the basis of supplementary information provided to it, that one related position in UNTSO, which is proposed for redeployment to the Kuwait Joint Support Office, has been vacant since August 2015.

II.35 **Given the justification provided, the Advisory Committee recommends the transfer of 1 post of Finance Assistant (Local level) from UNMOGIP to the Kuwait Joint Support Office as an interim measure. However, in view of workload considerations with respect to payroll processing, the continued absence of a full analysis of costs and benefits of the Kuwait Joint Support Office and the long-standing vacancy of the related position in UNTSO, the Committee recommends the abolishment of 1 General Service Finance Assistant post, which was proposed to be transferred to the Kuwait Joint Support Office and is currently located in UNTSO. Any related non-post expenditure provisions should be adjusted accordingly.**

II.36 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for post resources, subject to its comments in paragraph II.35 above.**

Other staffing considerations

II.37 In connection with the staffing proposal for UNTSO, the Advisory Committee notes that the post of Chief of Mission Support (P-5) in the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process in Jerusalem is to be abolished, taking into account the co-location of UNTSO with the Office and with the aim of improving synergies and maximizing efficiency gains. The two entities have determined that the Chief of Mission Support (D-1) of UNTSO would also serve as the Chief of Mission Support for the Office of the Special Coordinator. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the abolishment of the P-5 post would increase the workload and responsibilities of the UNTSO Chief of Mission Support, which would include reporting to two Heads of Mission on matters pertaining to the delivery of support services (see table II.1 and para. II.7 above).

Comments and recommendation on non-post resources

II.38 The Secretary-General proposes non-post resources for the biennium 2018-2019 in the amount of $35,490,400, reflecting a net decrease of $2,138,900, or 5.7 per cent, compared with 2016-2017 resources. Reductions are proposed under nearly every component of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, UNTSO and UNMOGIP.

Vehicles

II.39 The Advisory Committee notes from the supplementary information provided to it that under general operating expenses for UNTSO, an amount of $458,100 would provide for the maintenance of 166 vehicles in the mission area, including

spare parts to maintain 29 armoured vehicles deployed within the mission's area of operations. It is also indicated that, under furniture and equipment, an increase of $694,700 is proposed, in part for the replacement of vehicles that have surpassed their useful life and are not economical to repair.

II.40 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a detailed breakdown of the cost of the 15 new vehicles proposed for UNTSO and details on the age and composition of the current fleet requiring maintenance, as well as the number of users per vehicle (vehicle ratio). The Committee noted that in five personnel categories, the vehicle ratios for the mission were above the standard ratio. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that UNTSO should make concerted efforts to adjust vehicle holdings so as to ensure greater compliance with the prescribed standard vehicle ratios. Given that the mission has vehicle ratios above the standard in five personnel categories, the Committee also recommends that the number of new vehicles to be acquired be reduced by two general-purpose heavy four-wheel-drive vehicles and that the related resource requirements be adjusted accordingly.**

Travel of staff

II.41 In the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee, it is indicated that an amount of $621,300 is proposed under travel of staff for UNMOGIP for 2018-2019, an increase of $24,600, or 4.1 per cent, from the $596,700 provided for 2016-2017. The Secretary-General also indicates that an overexpenditure occurred in 2016-2017 owing to the unforeseen requirement for additional within-mission travel to secure new office space and accommodation due to the mandatory relocation of three field stations. **Given the lack of a sufficient justification for the increase in the biennium 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of $24,600 to the proposed level of resources for the biennium 2018-2019.**

II.42 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs II.40 and II.41 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Section 6
Peaceful uses of outer space

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$7,222,600
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$7,161,900
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$2,033,900

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

II.43 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 6 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $7,161,900 before recosting, representing a net reduction of $60,700, or 0.8 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 6) table 6.3).

II.44 The Secretary-General attributes this decrease in non-post requirements to the expected impact of efficiencies that the Office for Outer Space Affairs plans to bring about in 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 6.11). According to the budget fascicle, the

Office will achieve the proposed decreases through better coordination of and arrangements for the travel of fellowship recipients, with a view to maintaining the total number of opportunities offered under grants and contributions in 2018-2019 (ibid., para. 6.25) (see also para. II.48). During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they are to be achieved and the extent to which they can be considered efficiencies. Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are included in chapter I above.

II.45 The regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019 are summarized in table II.5, along with the extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019 (ibid., tables 6.2 and 6.4).

Table II.5
Staffing resources

	Posts	*Level*
Regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	23	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 11 P-3/4, 3 P-2/1 and 5 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	23	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 11 P-3/4, 3 P-2/1 and 5 GS (OL)
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	3	1 P-4 and 2 GS (OL)

Comments and recommendation on posts

II.46 As shown in table II.5, the Secretary-General proposes the continuation of 23 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, reflecting no change compared with the total approved for 2016-2017 (ibid., table 6.8).

II.47 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for post resources.**

Comments and recommendation on non-post resources

II.48 The Secretary-General proposes non-post resources for the biennium 2018-2019 in the amount of $1,333,300, reflecting a net reduction of $60,700, or 4.4 per cent, compared with 2016-2017 resources, at revised rates. The decrease is due primarily to reductions under grants and contributions and other efficiencies (see also para. II.44).

Grants and contributions

II.49 The provision of $822,500 under grants and contributions represents a decrease of $114,900, or 12.3 per cent, compared with the approved resources for the biennium 2016-2017, at revised rates. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with detailed information on the activities, number and country representation of participants and expenditures under fellowships and grants for 2016-2017. The Committee was also informed that the number of fellowship opportunities available to individual participants from developing countries in 2018-2019 would not be reduced, despite the reduction in resources proposed for the biennium. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its previous comment that more detailed information in respect of fellowships, such as the anticipated number of participants and the related costs, should be included in future budget submissions and that the corresponding actual expenditures should be reflected in the relevant performance reports (see A/70/7, para. II.77).** Further comments

and recommendations of the Committee on grants and contributions are included in chapter I above.

Travel of staff

II.50 The proposed requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 on travel of staff amount to $177,700 before recosting, reflecting no change in resources compared with the appropriation of $177,700 for 2016-2017. The Advisory Committee noted that no savings from travel efficiencies were reflected in the Secretary-General's proposal. The Committee notes the $30,500 increase in travel resources for the biennium 2016-2017 compared with 2014-2015 and the 56 per cent utilization rate of the 2016-2017 travel budget as at 30 April 2017. **Given that no savings from travel are proposed and given the relatively low utilization rate of the travel budget for 2016-2017, the Advisory Committee recommends a 10 per cent reduction, representing $17,800, in the proposed budget for travel of staff for the biennium 2018-2019.**

II.51 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraph II.50 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Part III
International justice and law

Section 7
International Court of Justice

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$45,814,700
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$46,963,700

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

III.1 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 7 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $46,963,700 before recosting, reflecting a net increase of $1,149,000, or 2.5 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 7) and Corr.1, table 7.3).

III.2 The Secretary-General attributes the net increase of $1,149,000 to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $1,629,700, reflecting the removal of non-recurrent requirements relating to the discontinuation of one-time consultancies and contractual services;

(b) Other resource changes: a net increase of $2,778,700 that would provide for the upward reclassification of two posts under the Registry, and non-post resources that would support the Court in the review of its caseload, in the training of Registry staff and in addressing the recommendations relating to the Court's information technology services, including the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system at the Court (Umoja or an alternative) and the implementation of solutions to enable business continuity in the event of a disaster.

III.3 Table III.1 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019.

Table III.1
Staffing resources

	Number	Level
Regular budget		
Approved for the biennium 2016-2017	116	1 ASG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 14 P-4, 19 P-3, 20 P-2/1, 6 GS (PL) and 50 GS (OL)
Proposed for the biennium 2018-2019	116	1 ASG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 16 P-4, 17 P-3, 20 P-2/1, 6 GS (PL) and 50 GS (OL)
Reclassification		2 P-3 as P-4 under the Registry

Comments and recommendations on posts

III.4 As shown in table III.1, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 116 posts (60 in the Professional and higher categories and 56 in the General Service and related categories) for the biennium 2018-2019, representing the same number of posts as those approved for the biennium 2016-2017.

III.5 The proposed increase is related to the reclassification of two posts of Legal Officer (P-3) as P-4 posts in the Department of Legal Matters of the Registry. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the main tasks associated with the reclassified posts would include: (a) overseeing multiple aspects of the P-2 law clerk programme; (b) acting as co-secretary of the Rules Committee and the related working groups; (c) providing assistance to drafting committees and comprehensive support to the plenary of the Court in relation to its judicial activity; and (d) supervising and reviewing legal work of other departments and divisions. The Committee was also informed that the functions of the acting secretary of the Rules Committee and the related working groups could not be carried out by the incumbents of the existing posts at the D-1, P-5 or P-4 level because their roles within the hierarchy of the Department were different. In addition, the Committee was informed that the workload related to overseeing the P-2 law clerk programme had increased, with the number of P-2 posts rising from 4 to 12 over the past few years. **The Advisory Committee considers that the added responsibilities and workload could be carried out by one rather than two Legal Officers at the P-4 level. Consequently, the Committee recommends the approval of the upward reclassification of one post of Legal Officer (P-3) as a P-4 post and against the proposed reclassification of a second post of Legal Officer (P-3) as a P-4 post in the Department of Legal Matters of the Registry.**

III.6 **Subject to its comments in paragraph III.5 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for post resources.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

III.7 As indicated in the additional information provided by the Secretary-General, the non-post resources proposed for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $25,037,400, reflecting a net increase of $1,024,800, or 4.3 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 resources at revised rates. The proposed increase reflects primarily: (a) an increase of $508,000, or 104.6 per cent, under consultants; (b) an increase of $352,000, or 119.1 per cent, under furniture and equipment; and (c) an increase of $193,000, or 9.4 per cent, under other staff costs. The proposal also reflects increases under supplies and materials ($41,400), contractual services ($35,900) and general operating expenses ($24,800). The increases are offset in part by reductions under non-staff compensation ($125,500), as a result of the deaths of one former member of the Court and two widows of former judges, and under hospitality ($4,800).

Consultants

III.8 The amount of $993,600 is proposed for consultants, reflecting an increase of $508,000, or 104.6 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the table below, showing the breakdown of the requirements for consultants.

Table III.2
Breakdown of requirements for consultants for the biennium 2018-2019
(United States dollars)

Consultants for the Registry	
Provision for internal audit services	55 396
Graphic designer	10 184
External security audit and penetration test	46 765
Administration of justice (experts on allegations of misconduct informal dispute resolution and so on)	113 007
Enterprise resource planning system (Umoja or alternate) — project management and business process engineering	211 378
Enterprise resource planning system (Umoja or alternate) — development of a project for deployment	27 270
Enterprise resource planning system (Umoja or alternate) — local technical assessment	5 196
Enterprise resource planning system (Umoja or alternate) — initial support	15 588
Enterprise resource planning system (Umoja or alternate) — support costs (recurrent or non-recurrent)	249 414
Subtotal	**734 200**
Experts for cases before the Court	
Engagement of 6 experts or assessors for cases to be heard in 2018-2019	259 400
Subtotal	**259 400**
Total	**993 600**

III.9 With regard to experts for cases before the Court, the additional information provided to the Advisory Committee indicated a total amount of $259,400 to cover, inter alia, three trips by six experts to The Hague for a duration of 10 days each. The Committee noted some inaccuracies in the calculation of the amount, with 10 days of daily subsistence allowance in The Hague for each expert amounting to $2,900 (instead of $2,924) and the total cost of daily subsistence allowance for six experts for three 10-day trips to The Hague amounting to $52,200 (instead of $52,638). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the requirement for experts of the Court be recalculated and adjusted accordingly.**

III.10 As regards the six experts, upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was also informed that the mandate of the Secretary-General's Trust Fund to Assist States in the Settlement of Disputes through the International Court of Justice was strictly limited to providing financial assistance to States to defray expenses incurred by them in connection with a dispute submitted to the Court or the execution of a judgment of the Court (see A/59/372, para. 2). According to the Secretary-General, the Fund is not designed or mandated to finance any expenses related to the functioning of the Court.

III.11 With regard to the proposed use of consultants for internal audit services, external security audit, graphic design and investigation/expertise relating to the United Nations system of administration of justice (totalling $225,352), the Advisory Committee was informed that the Court was committed to utilizing in-house expertise and capacity to the fullest possible extent and sought, whenever possible, the assistance of the Secretariat or other United Nations entities in reviewing certain processes and practices. According to the Secretary-General, there

are occasions, however, when it is not possible to obtain such assistance, because United Nations entities cannot always lend their support within the requested time frames. **The Advisory Committee trusts that efforts will continue to be made by the Court to draw on the expertise and capability of United Nations entities to the fullest possible extent.**

Enterprise resource planning system

III.12 Concerning the proposed requirements for consultants to prepare for the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system, the Advisory Committee was informed upon enquiry that, during the biennium 2014-2015, out of an overall allotment of $473,790, a total of $226,321 had been used for preparation for Umoja. During 2016-2017, out of an allotment of $332,496 to support Umoja or an alternative enterprise resource planning system, an amount of $63,199 had been used as at 30 April 2017. To date, a total of $806,286 had been allotted for an enterprise resource planning system, with $310,615 having been utilized as at 30 April 2017.

III.13 The Advisory Committee was also informed that the first group of consultants hired by the Court had concluded, in its report of 7 April 2015, that the Court was not ready to adopt Umoja. The consultants had indicated that, in order to decide whether to implement Umoja, the Court needed to understand the implications of that system. The Court's second group of consultants, who had submitted their report in August 2016, had found that Umoja was available in English only, and had noted that that could give rise to an issue, as article 39 of the Court's statute stated that "the official languages of the Court shall be French and English". These consultants had also stressed that the small size of the Court and the small number of its administrative staff would make it very challenging to carry out an acceptable distribution of roles and responsibilities with regard to Umoja. They had determined, however, that the Court's administrative processes could be implemented within Umoja.

III.14 In addition, the Advisory Committee was informed upon enquiry that the Court had requested the Registry to take the steps necessary to provide answers to the questions raised by the second group of consultants. To that end, the Registry had submitted to the Secretariat a request for support in finalizing a proposal on the choice of an enterprise resource planning system. In response to that request, the director of the Umoja project and the Controller had commissioned a team of experts from the United Nations Office at Geneva to conduct an on-site analysis of the Court's business requirements and processes in order to express an opinion on the feasibility of implementing Umoja. The team had concluded that there were no material gaps that would prevent the Court from successfully implementing Umoja, and that the move to an enterprise resource planning system such as Umoja would improve the efficiency and transparency of administrative processes as well as internal controls. The report of the team of experts had been transmitted to the Registrar on 7 June 2017.

III.15 Furthermore, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in addition to submitting its request to the Umoja team, the Registry had conducted further research to ascertain what alternative systems would be available and best suited to the Court's needs and resources. As at 9 June 2017, the Court was still evaluating four enterprise resource planning alternatives (including one software programme already used in the Finance Division of the Registry), that were available in both official languages of the Court and used by various United Nations entities. According to the information provided to the Committee, once the results of the pending enquiries were known, the Information Technology Committee and the Administrative and Budgetary Committee of the Court would review the matter and a final decision would be taken by the full Court.

III.16 Independent of any decision regarding the selection of a specific system, section 7 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 includes requirements related to the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system totalling $1,108,700. Those requirements comprise $508,846 for consultants, $337,700 for data processing services, $129,700 for training, $82,600 for general temporary assistance, $29,000 for communications and $20,000 for miscellaneous expenses.

III.17 **While acknowledging the administrative autonomy of the Court, the Advisory Committee notes with concern the time and resources already spent over the past two bienniums on the selection of an enterprise resource planning system by the Court, and the fact that the selection process has been inconclusive. The Committee notes the extensive time taken to date by the Court to consider a decision on this matter. The Committee considers that the resources allocated for the biennium 2016-2017 should suffice for the Court to make a decision and present a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed solution, accompanied by a detailed budget proposal for its implementation, should the Court decide that an enterprise resource planning solution is indeed necessary at this time. The Committee trusts that, irrespective of the decision, the quality of information would be similar to that produced by Umoja. The Committee is of the view that, without a decision on a specific system, the budget proposal related to the implementation of such a system runs the risk of being significantly inaccurate, as each enterprise resource planning solution will have different implementation costs. Consequently, the Committee recommends a reduction to the proposed budget of the Court of $1,108,700 corresponding to the requirements for the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system in the biennium 2018-2019.**

Training

III.18 For the first time, the proposed budget of the Court includes a specific provision for training. In previous bienniums, a budget for training was provided to the Court by the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat from its training budget (see A/72/6 (Sect. 7) and Corr.1, para. 7.25). Notwithstanding the provision of $129,700 for enterprise resource planning-related training mentioned in paragraph III.16 above, the proposed additional resources for training amount to $268,200. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the table below showing the training budgets for the biennium 2014-2015 and 2016.

Table III.3
Resources for training for the biennium 2014-2015 and 2016
(United States dollars)

Period	*Allotment*	*Total expenditure*	*Unspent balance*
2014-2015	152 500	148 945	3 555
2016	23 570	22 498	1 072

III.19 **Considering that the allotments for training in past periods were significantly lower than the proposed requirements for the biennium 2018-2019 and that these allotments were not fully used, the Advisory Committee recommends a 10 per cent reduction in the non-enterprise resource planning training resources of $268,200, equal to $26,820.**

Travel

III.20 The amount of $49,700 is proposed for the travel and daily subsistence allowance of the President of the Court for his annual visit to United Nations Headquarters and his annual attendance at the meeting of the International Law Commission held in Geneva, and for one trip per year by the President or another member of the Court on official business.

Furniture and equipment

III.21 The proposed requirements for furniture and equipment amount to $647,600, representing an increase of $352,000, or 119.1 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the majority of the requirements for furniture and equipment related to a one-time request for the purchase of shelves for the offices of judges and ad hoc judges. A total of 23 offices would need to be equipped with such shelves. The Committee was provided with the following breakdown of the costs:

- Total of 23 rooms at €10,896.25: €250,613.75
- Removal of existing bookshelves: €7,500 (estimated)
- Repair of walls due to the removal of existing shelves: €11,600 (estimated)
- Contingency (15 per cent): €38,717
- Total general: €308,430, excluding value added tax

III.22 **The Advisory Committee considers that the cost of the proposed bookshelves (€10,896 per room and €250,613 in total) is high, and encourages the Court to envisage more efficient alternatives. In addition, given that the replacement of bookshelves is a relatively simple procedure and that a provision for the repair of walls following the removal of existing shelves has already been included in the costs, the Committee considers that the contingency amount is not applicable to a project of this nature. Consequently, the Committee recommends a reduction in the proposed requirements for the replacement of the bookshelves of $44,337.**

III.23 The proposed requirements under furniture and equipment also include an amount of $64,500 for the replacement of one of the Court's vehicles. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the vehicle had been in use at the Court since October 2009 and was expected to have been driven more than 130,000 km by January 2018. The Committee was also informed that the Court's fleet of three vehicles was used mostly to transport the President, the judges and the Registrar to official meetings and functions. The vehicles were also used for the delivery of materials to States parties, international organizations, and so forth. In addition, the Committee was informed that the average monthly utilization of the vehicles in 2016 had varied from 447 km to 1074 km (or 278 miles to 667 miles). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Court to conduct a cost analysis of its fleet, comparing the costs of maintaining, replacing and driving vehicles with the cost of an external car service.**

III.24 **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs III.9, III.17, III.19 and III.22 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Other issues

III.25 The budget fascicle indicates that, under the terms of regulation 2.14 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, the programme budget

proposals of the International Court of Justice are prepared by the Court, in consultation with the Secretary-General, and are submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, together with such observations as he may deem desirable. According to the Secretary-General, because of that regulation the proposed budget for the Court does not reflect the changes in line with General Assembly resolution 71/274 and exceeds the revised appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017 by $1,149,000 (ibid., para. 7.1). **In the view of the Advisory Committee, General Assembly resolution 71/274 on the budget outline, in which the Assembly decided, inter alia, that the priorities for the biennium 2018-2019 would include "promotion of justice and international law", applies to the International Court of Justice. It is the decision of the Secretary-General to request the different departments or entities to anticipate efficiencies and to reduce their respective budget requests, which cannot be requested of the Court, as financial regulation 2.14 limits the ability of the Secretary-General to impose reductions in the budget proposals of the Court.**

Section 8
Legal affairs

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$61,539,600
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$49,781,800
Other assessed resources	$7,671,400[a]
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$11,030,000

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

[a] Does not reflect the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/295 on the support account for peacekeeping operations.

III.26 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 8 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $49,781,800 before recosting, reflecting a net decrease of $11,757,800, or 19.1 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 8) and Corr.1, table 8.3).

III.27 The Secretary-General attributes the net reduction of $11,757,800 to the following factors:

(a) Technical adjustments: a decrease of $11,760,600, reflecting the net effect of: (i) the removal of non-recurrent requirements totalling $12,371,200, relating to a reduction in the resources approved for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone for the biennium 2016-2017; and (ii) an increase of $610,600 due to the biennial provision for two new posts and two temporary positions established in 2016-2017 in the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea;

(b) New and expanded mandates: an increase of $551,200 to provide support to the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, for the period 2017-2020, in line with General Assembly resolution 71/257 on oceans and the law of the sea;

(c) Changes within and/or across sections, which would be cost-neutral, reflecting the downward reclassification of a post of Legal Officer (P-4) as a P-3

post in the Codification Division and the upward reclassification of a post of Editor (P-2) as a P-3 post in the Treaty Section. The proposed changes also include the redeployment and distribution of $77,600 in non-post resources from subprogramme 3 and programme support to subprogrammes 1, 2, 4 and 6 and to executive direction and management;

(d) Other changes, including a decrease of $548,400 made possible through efficiencies that the Office of Legal Affairs plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed reductions are a result of the efforts of the Office to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

III.28 The Advisory Committee notes that the non-recurrent requirements of $12,371,200, relating to resources for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, were resources approved as a subvention or under a reduced commitment authority, outside the regular budget process. Excluding those requirements, the regular budget proposal for section 8 for the biennium 2018-2019 would have shown a net increase of $613,400, or 1.2 per cent, compared with 2016-2017.

III.29 Table III.4 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and those proposed for 2018-2019. It also shows the other assessed and extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019.

Table III.4
Staffing resources

	Number	*Level*
Regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	147	1 USG, 1 ASG, 4 D-2, 7 D-1, 19 P-5, 23 P-4, 23 P-3, 14 P-2/1, 11 GS (PL) and 44 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	146	1 USG, 1 ASG, 4 D-2, 7 D-1, 19 P-5, 22 P-4, 26 P-3, 13 P-2/1, 11 GS (PL) and 42 GS (OL)
Reclassifications	2	1 P-4 as P-3 under subprogramme 3
		1 P-2 as P-3 under subprogramme 6
Conversions	2	1 P-3 and 1 GS (OL) from general temporary assistance positions to posts under subprogramme 3
Abolishments	3	1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 1
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 2
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 5
Projected for 2018-2019		
Other assessed and extrabudgetary[a]	33	2 D-2, 6 P-5, 16 P-4/3, 2 P-1/2, 7 GS (OL)

[a] Comprising 19 posts financed from other assessed resources and 14 extrabudgetary posts.

Comments and recommendations on posts

III.30 As shown in table III.4, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 144 posts and 2 temporary posts (93 in the Professional and higher categories and 53 in the General Service and related categories), representing a net decrease of 1 post compared with the number of posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017.

III.31 During the biennium 2016-2017, two new posts (1 Programme Officer (P-4) and 1 Legal Officer (P-3)) under subprogramme 4, Law of the sea and ocean affairs, were established on the basis of General Assembly 70/235. Other proposed changes for the biennium 2018-2019 are as follows:

(a) Reclassifications: one post of Legal Officer (P-4) as a P-3 post under subprogramme 3, Progressive development and codification of international law, and one post of Editor (P-2) as a P-3 post under subprogramme 6, Custody, registration and publication of treaties;

(b) Conversions: one post of Legal Officer (P-3) and one post of Video Producer (General Service (Other level)) under subprogramme 3, from general temporary assistance to regular budget posts;

(c) Abolishments: one General Service (Other level) post under subprogramme 1, Provision of legal services to the United Nations system as a whole; one General Service (Other level) post under subprogramme 2, General legal services provided to United Nations organs and programmes; and one General Service (Other level) post under subprogramme 5, Progressive harmonization, modernization and unification of the law of international trade.

III.32 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed upward reclassification of a post of Editor (P-2) as a P-3 post in the Treaty Section reflected the increased complexity of the responsibilities associated with the post. According to the Secretary-General, the editorial work carried out on the United Nations *Treaty Series* requires the detailed review of complex legal documents in almost 100 languages to ascertain the accuracy and completeness of the text reproduced in the Series and to ensure compliance with United Nations editorial standards. During the decade of the 1990s, when the Treaty Section assumed responsibility for copy preparation for the *Treaty Series*, the average number of treaties registered per year was 1,156. During the period 2007-2016, that number increased to 1,430. The Advisory Committee was also informed upon enquiry that the translation of treaties was carried out by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. Furthermore, given the large number of registered treaties and the lack of resources necessary for their translation in-house (in particular treaties in languages other than the official languages of the United Nations), the Department had recently increased its utilization of external contractors. According to the Secretary-General, because the quality of external translations is significantly inferior to that of in-house translations, external translations necessitate extensive editorial work by the editors and proofreaders of the Treaty Section. **Considering that the editorial function of the Treaty Section has not substantially changed since the responsibility for copy preparation was handed over to the Section more than a decade ago and that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management remains in charge of the translation of treaties, the Advisory Committee considers that the quality issues relating to external translations should be resolved by the Department, not by the Treaty Section through the upward reclassification of an editorial post. Consequently, the Committee recommends against the proposed reclassification of a post of Editor (P-2) as a P-3 post in the Treaty Section (see also sect. 2 above).**

III.33 **Subject to its recommendation in paragraph III.32 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for post resources.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

III.34 The additional information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that the non-post resources proposed for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $8,816,100 under the regular budget, reflecting a net reduction of $12,321,800, or 58.2 per cent, compared with the 2016-2017 resources at revised rates. The proposed reduction reflects primarily: (a) a reduction of $12,371,200 under grants and contributions, due to the removal of non-recurrent requirements for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (see paras. III.27 (a) and III.28 above); (b) a reduction of $321,000 under other staff costs, owing to the proposed conversion of two general temporary assistance positions (1 Legal Officer (P-3) and 1 Video Producer (General Service (Other level)) under subprogramme 3; (c) a reduction of $93,600 under supplies and materials, due mostly to the redistribution of resources for non-post items according to the anticipated needs under subprogramme 5; and (d) a reduction of $80,000 in the resources for consultants, owing to the completion of the work of two consultants supporting informal consultations of the States parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement under subprogramme 4 and adjustments to non-post items under subprogramme 5. Additional reductions in non-post requirements appear under experts ($26,000), travel of staff ($21,500), furniture and equipment ($13,300), general operating expenses ($7,300) and hospitality ($1,400).

Travel of representatives

III.35 The aforementioned reductions are offset in part by an increase of $592,600 under travel of representatives. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that this increase reflected the requirements for the travel of participants from developing countries to the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects. The estimated resource requirements of $838,400, including an increase of $560,400, for the travel of representatives to participate in the Regular Process (which cover airfare costs and daily subsistence allowance) comprise the following:

(a) For the global assessment: (i) $7,000 for the travel of one Joint Coordinator to attend two meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole; (ii) $258,400 for the travel of 15 members of the Group of Experts to attend four meetings of the Group of Experts in order to develop its workplan and work on the assessment; and (iii) $86,000 for the travel of 20 members of the writing teams for five days to discuss and agree on writing assignments and the drafting of the assessment;

(b) For regional workshops (lasting two days each): (i) $52,000 for the travel of five members of the Group of Experts and the Joint Coordinator to attend four regional workshops on capacity-building; (ii) $160,000 for the travel of 20 meeting participants to attend four regional workshops on capacity-building; and (iii) $275,000 for the travel of 25 members of the writing teams (20 from the region and 5 from outside the region) to attend five regional workshops on capacity-building.

Grants and contributions

III.36 Under grants and contributions, the proposed amount of $595,100 would provide for fellowships for participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the purpose of attending the International Law

Fellowship Programme in 2018 and 2019 and three annual regional courses, in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America and the Caribbean, under the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed resources covered the travel of and stipends for participants receiving fellowships, study visits and, for the International Law Fellowship Programme, the tuition fees of The Hague Academy of International Law. In total, 89 fellows had participated in the 2016-2017 fellowship programme (21 in The Hague, 20 in Addis Ababa, 20 in Santiago and 28 in Bangkok). The average total cost per fellow had varied from $1,800 in Bangkok to $5,300 in The Hague. Related comments and observations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

Policy organs

III.37 Under policymaking organs, non-post resources in the amount of $2,874,400 are proposed for the International Law Commission. The Commission holds an annual session in Geneva of 10 to 12 weeks' duration. According to the Secretary-General, it is expected that the Commission may hold a split session in excess of 10 weeks' duration in 2018, because the session will include additional meetings in New York and Geneva to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Commission's founding. The Secretary-General also indicates that it is expected that the Commission will hold a 10-week split session in 2019. The resource estimate would cover two split sessions of the Commission for 21 weeks during the biennium 2018-2019. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its previous recommendation that adequate resources be provided to support the full duration of the meetings of the International Law Commission up to a total of 12 weeks per annum as mandated by the General Assembly (see A/70/7, para. III.29). The Committee trusts that the Office of Legal Affairs will make every effort to absorb costs within the overall proposed allocation for section 8, taking into account further efficiencies to be expected as a result of the reduced requirements for the travel of New York-based staff, failing which any additional expenditures should be reflected in the relevant performance report.**

III.38 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for non-post resources.**

General comments and observations

III.39 The budget fascicle indicates that monitoring and internal evaluation activities will continue to be regularly carried out throughout the biennium at the subprogramme level in order to continuously assess the programme of work of the Office of Legal Affairs (A/72/6 (Sect. 8) and Corr.1, para. 8.20). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office of Legal Affairs expected that the Office of Internal Oversight Services would conduct a cross-cutting evaluation of all its subprogrammes during the biennium 2018-2019. The Committee was also informed that the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea would undertake cross-cutting self-assessments throughout the biennium. The evaluation activities related to the Regular Process had contributed to the formulation of a programme of work for the Division for the period 2017-2020, for the second cycle of the Regular Process. Similarly, the evaluations of the International Trade Law Division were both thematic and cross-cutting. **The Advisory Committee trusts that information on the results of the cross-cutting evaluation of the Office of Legal Affairs to be conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in the biennium 2018-2019 will be provided to the General Assembly. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the Office of Legal Affairs to enhance the cross-cutting evaluation of its activities.**

Part IV
International cooperation for development

Section 9
Economic and social affairs

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$162,147,600
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$171,266,474
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$137,705,700

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

IV.1 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 9 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $171,266,474 before recosting, reflecting a net increase of $9,118,874, or 5.6 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), table 9.1 and para. 9.7). The proposal includes an amount of $13,321,574 as a contribution of the United Nations Secretariat to the resident coordinator system (see paras. IV.16 to IV.21 below). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, excluding the amount of $13,321,574, the overall resources proposed for the section for the biennium 2018-2019 amounted to $157,944,900 before recosting, reflecting a net decrease of $4,202,700, or 2.5 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017.

IV.2 The Secretary-General attributes the net increase of $9,118,900 to the following three factors (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), paras. 9.9-9.12):

(a) Technical adjustments: a net decrease of $3,130,800, reflecting the removal of non-recurrent requirements of $4,479,700 and $79,000 approved pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 71/272 and 71/280, respectively, offset in part by the full biennial provision of $1,427,900 relating to four new temporary posts (1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) under subprogramme 8, Sustainable forest management, that were established effective 1 January 2016 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248 and five new temporary posts under subprogrammes 4, Statistics (2 P-5), and 9, Financing for development (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3), that were established effective 1 January 2017 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/272;

(b) New and expanded mandates: an increase of $13,974,774, reflecting (i) a contribution of the United Nations Secretariat to the resident coordinator system in the amount of $13,321,574; and (ii) non-post resources in the amount of $653,200 for new mandates pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/272;

(c) Other changes: a reduction of $1,725,100, made possible through efficiencies that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019 as a result of the efforts of the Department to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

IV.3 The regular budget resources under this section are complemented by extrabudgetary funding projected at $137,705,700 for 2018-2019 (excluding in-kind contributions), which would provide for various substantive and technical cooperation activities, including consultancies, expert groups, travel, technical advisory services, training, workshops, seminars and field projects (A/72/6 (Sect. 9), para. 9.13).

IV.4 Table IV.1 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the Secretary-General's proposals for 2018-2019. The table also shows extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019.

Table IV.1
Staffing resources

	Number	*Level*
Regular budget		
Approved for 2016-2017	502	1 USG, 2 ASG, 9 D-2, 31 D-1, 67 P-5, 89 P-4, 67 P-3, 43 P-2/1, 33 GS (PL) and 160 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	494	1 USG, 2 ASG, 9 D-2, 31 D-1, 67 P-5, 90 P-4, 67 P-3, 43 P-2/1, 33 GS (PL) and 151 GS (OL)
Conversions	2	1 P-4 and 1 P-3 under subprogramme 1
Abolishments	(10)	1 GS (OL) under executive direction and management
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 1
		1 P-3 and 1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 2
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 5
		2 GS (OL) under subprogramme 6
		3 GS (OL) under subprogramme 7
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	33	1 D-1, 4 P-5, 10 P-4/3, 1 P-2/1, 3 GS (PL) and 14 GS (OL)

Comments and recommendations on posts

IV.5 The Secretary-General proposes a total of 494 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, which represents a net reduction of eight posts compared with the total number of posts approved for 2016-2017 (see table IV.1), comprising the proposed conversion of two general temporary assistance positions to posts and the abolishment of 10 posts.

Conversion of general temporary assistance positions to posts

IV.6 The Secretary-General proposes the conversion of two general temporary assistance positions (1 P-4 and 1 P-3) to established posts under subprogramme 1, Economic and Social Council support and coordination, to implement the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 67/226), and in view of the long-term need to support the review and the continuing request to assist in the development and implementation of actions related to existing and new review mandates pursuant to Assembly resolution 71/243 (ibid., para. 9.67 (c)).

IV.7 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the two positions, which were approved in the biennium 2014-2015 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/226, had been encumbered since May 2014. The proposed conversion from general temporary assistance positions to posts aimed to further strengthen the ability of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to support the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 and, in particular, to

contribute to the annual reporting by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

IV.8 As for the potential impact of the Secretary-General's ongoing reform of the development pillar on the Department and the proposed 2018-2019 budget, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Secretary-General had initiated the process of research and consultation, with a view to presenting proposals on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/243. The potential impact on the proposed budget for 2018-2019 could not therefore be foreseen at this stage. In this connection, the Committee notes that an advance version of the report of the Secretary-General on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all (A/72/124-E/2018/3) was circulated in July 2017. In that report, the Secretary-General offers his vision for the United Nations development system in response to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and within the context of his overall reform agenda.

IV.9 **While recognizing the functions of the two general temporary positions in enhancing the substantive capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to support the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the Advisory Committee considers that the two positions should remain under general temporary assistance for the time being, pending an assessment of the longer-term need for the functions following consideration by the General Assembly of the Secretary-General's reform proposals in the area of development. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed conversion of the two general temporary assistance positions (1 P-4 and 1 P-3) to established posts at this stage, which should be reflected under non-post resources (other staff costs) accordingly.**

Abolishments

IV.10 As indicated in table IV.1, the Secretary-General proposes the abolishment of 10 posts (9 General Service (Other level) and 1 P-3). The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed abolishment of the post of Social Affairs Officer (P-3) in the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues results from efficiencies that the Department plans to bring about in 2018-2019 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), para. 9.74). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretariat would adjust the workload through a redistribution of tasks among remaining staff members, as part of the efficiencies that the Department planned to bring about.

Vacant posts

IV.11 As at 30 April 2017, a total of 58 posts under section 9 were vacant (3 D-1, 8 P-5, 9 P-4, 8 P-3, 4 P-2, 5 General Service (Principal level) and 21 General Service (Other level). Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with an update on the recruitment status of the posts, which showed that, of the 58 vacant posts, 4 were proposed for abolishment, 22 were either already encumbered or to be encumbered by 1 August 2017 and 15 were temporary vacancies relating to cases in which incumbents maintained a lien against their original posts. **The Advisory Committee expects that all vacant posts will be filled expeditiously.**

IV.12 The Advisory Committee notes from the vacancy update provided that one post of Chief of the Environment and Energy Statistics Branch (D-1) had been vacant since June 2015. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the recruitment for the post was ongoing and that the shortlisted applicants had been

identified, with the interviews scheduled for July 2017. The Committee was also informed that the posting of the vacancy had been delayed in anticipation of the outcome of the five-year comprehensive review of the work and operations of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, which resulted in the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/27. The responsibilities of the post had been expanded to include the newly mandated substantive area of global geospatial information management, in addition to the areas of environmental information, energy and industry statistics and international statistical classifications and, in particular, their integration in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IV.13 **The Advisory Committee is concerned at the length of time that the D-1 post has remained vacant. The Committee expects that the post will be filled expeditiously and trusts that the Secretary-General will provide an update on the recruitment status of the post to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the proposed programme budget.**

IV.14 **Subject to its recommendation in paragraph IV.9 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for post resources.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

IV.15 The proposed non-post resources amount to $16,985,926 for the biennium 2018-2019, excluding the amount of $13,321,574 for the resident coordinator system (see paras. IV.1 above and IV.16-IV.21 below), reflecting a decrease of $4,520,774, or 21 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. Proposed reductions are reflected under all budget classes except travel of representatives (owing to the additional resources required to cover new mandates approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/272) (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), para. 9.10 (b).

Support of the Secretariat to the resident coordinator system

IV.16 In section E of the budget fascicle, the Secretary-General presents the proposed United Nations Secretariat contribution to the United Nations Development Group cost-sharing arrangement for the resident coordinator system, including a brief summary of the background. The Secretary-General indicates that the amount of $13,321,574, which is being presented in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 in line with the request by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/272 B, is based on the amount proposed for 2016-2017 (see A/70/703). Furthermore, the amount is provisional pending his report on the refined proposal on the matter, including any adjustment to the proposed contribution of the United Nations Secretariat for 2018-2019 (ibid., paras. 9.10 (a) and 9.141).

IV.17 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the United Nations Development Group had commissioned an independent review of the cost-sharing formula, which was to be concluded by the end of June 2017. It was anticipated that the review would generate concrete recommendations on how the resident coordinator system could be made more effective through a sustainable, transparent, accountable, predictable and cost-efficient funding model, as defined and expected by Member States. The Group would then discuss the recommendations from the independent review, and the report of the Secretary-General on a refined proposal would be finalized in August 2017 for submission to the General Assembly at the main part of its seventy-second session. The Committee was also informed that since the refined proposal of the Secretary-General had not yet been prepared, the 2016-2017 figure, included in the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 as a

provisional amount, was considered the best estimate. Upon request for an update, the Committee was informed that, as of the end of July 2017, the Group had not received the final report of the independent review. **The Advisory Committee trusts that an update will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the proposed programme budget.**

IV.18 The Advisory Committee recalls that the amount of $13,321,574 proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on the issue (A/70/703) was not approved by the General Assembly. Instead, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to present to it at its seventy-second session a refined proposal on the cost-sharing arrangement and management of the financing thereof and to submit associated costs in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 (see resolution 71/272 B, sect. V). Furthermore, the Committee recalls that, during its consideration of the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 and the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/703), it expressed concerns about the inadequacy of the information on the overall resource estimates for the resident coordinator system, as well as the absence of a unified mechanism for intergovernmental consideration of all aspects of the cost-sharing arrangement, including the global budget of the resident coordinator system (see A/70/7, paras. IV.18-IV.28, and A/70/7/Add.48). The Committee notes that no such information is provided in the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide all the relevant information to the General Assembly in his forthcoming refined proposal on the cost-sharing arrangement, including details on budget formulation, financial reporting and oversight mechanisms.**

IV.19 **Given the situation described above, the Advisory Committee is not in a position to recommend the approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General for the Secretariat contribution to support the resident coordinator system for 2018-2019 prior to the submission of his refined proposal to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session. The Committee therefore recommends against the inclusion of $13,321,574 in the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 at this stage. A reduction in that amount should be made under non-post resources (grants and contributions).**

IV.20 In addition, the Advisory Committee notes that, in his recent report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda — ensuring a better future for all (A/72/124-E/2018/3) (see also para. IV.8 above), the Secretary-General presented a proposal on reasserting the authority and impartiality of resident coordinators.

IV.21 **Subject to its recommendation in paragraph IV.19 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources (see also para. IV.9 above).**

General comments and recommendations

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

IV.22 The Advisory Committee notes that no provision is provided for the travel expenses for the members of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management under policymaking organs (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), table 9.7 and paras. 9.23-9.25). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that as the Committee of Experts had a universal, rather than elected, membership, no resources were being proposed under section 9, which usually covers the travel of members of subsidiary bodies. Furthermore, since the creation of the Committee of Experts by the Economic and Social Council in 2011, Member States had funded the participation of their delegates, while the Department had made efforts to raise

extrabudgetary funds in order to enable developing countries to participate in the meetings of the Committee of Experts.

Contractual services

IV.23 The Advisory Committee also notes from the supplementary information provided to it that a provision of $76,200 is proposed under executive direction and management for contractual services to cover the engagement of specialized services required to achieve strategic objectives through, among other things, customization of content management applications, web content management and further enhancement of the websites of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that in-house capacity, such as information technology professionals, should be available in the Department to undertake activities relating to the management and enhancement of its websites. The Committee therefore considers that the requirements of the Department under contractual services should be reviewed with a view to fully utilizing in-house capacity and that the impact thereof should be reflected in future budget submissions.**

Section 10
Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$10,763,000
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$10,649,400
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$3,000,000

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

IV.24 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 10 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $10,649,400 before recosting, reflecting a net decrease of $113,600, or 1.1 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 10), table 10.3).

IV.25 The Secretary-General attributes the reduction of $113,600 under non-post resources to other changes made possible through efficiencies that the Office plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019, as a result of its efforts to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations (ibid., para. 10.9). The reduction of $113,600 reflects a $6,000 reduction under executive direction and management and a $107,600 reduction under the programme of work. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

IV.26 Table IV.2 below summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the Secretary-General's proposals for 2018-2019.

Table IV.2
Staffing resources

	Number	*Level*
Approved for 2016-2017	28	1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 6 P-5, 8 P-4, 4 P-3, 1 P-2/1 and 6 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	28	1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 6 P-5, 8 P-4, 4 P-3, 1 P-2/1 and 6 GS (OL)

Comments and recommendations on posts

IV.27 The Secretary-General proposes a total of 28 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, which is the same as the total number of posts approved for 2016-2017. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals under post resources.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

IV.28 The proposed non-post resources of $1,410,900 for the biennium 2018-2019 reflect a decrease of $113,600, or 7.5 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. The Secretary-General attributes the reduction of $113,600 to other changes made possible through efficiencies that the Office plans to bring about in 2018-2019 (see para. IV.25 above).

IV.29 The redeployment of resources is proposed under changes within and/or across sections, representing a net reduction of $28,400 under subprogramme 1, Least developed countries, and net increases of $10,600 and $17,800 under subprogrammes 2, Landlocked developing countries, and 3, Small island developing States, respectively (see A/72/6 (Sect. 10), table 10.3). It is indicated that the changes are mainly in relation to the midterm reviews of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, which was completed during 2016, and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, which are scheduled for completion during the biennium 2018-2019 (ibid., paras. 10.1, 10.8 and 10.13 and annex III).

IV.30 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals under non-post resources.**

General comments and recommendations

Overall resource requirements

IV.31 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while they encountered many common challenges, the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States each had specific issues, such as poverty eradication for the least developed countries, trade facilitation for the landlocked developing countries and climate change for the small island developing States. The Committee was also informed, inter alia, that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, which set out both regular and extrabudgetary resources, would provide the resources required to carry out activities and deliver outputs to fulfil the mandates of the three subprogrammes under section 10. Furthermore, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States would build partnerships in support of the three groups of countries by working with a broad range of stakeholders.

Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries

IV.32 With respect to the substantive servicing of the meetings of the Governing Council of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries (see ibid., tables 10.8 and 10.12), the Advisory Committee recalls that in May 2017 it concurred with the proposed establishment for two years of a position of Managing Director (D-2) to head the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, to be funded from extrabudgetary resources. More information in this regard is provided in chapter I above.

Section 11
United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$16,605,800
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$16,452,000
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$200,000

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

IV.33 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 11 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $16,452,000 before recosting, reflecting a net decrease of $153,800, or 0.9 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 11), table 11.3).

IV.34 The three subprogrammes of section 11, United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), are implemented by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Department of Public Information (ibid., paras. 11.23, 11.30 and 11.36).

IV.35 The Secretary-General attributes the reduction of $153,800 under non-post resources to changes made possible through efficiencies that the three offices plan to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019 as a result of, inter alia, their efforts to apply the expected Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

IV.36 The total projected extrabudgetary resources of $200,000 in cash for the biennium 2018-2019 would complement resources from the regular budget, under subprogramme 1, Coordination of global advocacy of and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development, to support the involvement of a broader range of civil society and private sector actors in activities relating to NEPAD (see A/72/6 (Sect. 11), para. 11.16).

IV.37 Table IV.3 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the Secretary-General's proposals for 2018-2019.

Table IV.3
Staffing resources

	Number	*Level*
Approved for 2016-2017	44	1 USG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 10 P-4, 13 P-3, 1 P-2/1, 1 GS (PL), 8 GS (OL) and 1 LL
Proposed for 2018-2019	44	1 USG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 10 P-4, 13 P-3, 1 P-2/1, 1 GS (PL), 8 GS (OL) and 1 LL

Comments and recommendations on posts

IV.38 The Secretary-General proposes a total of 44 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, which is the same as the total number of posts approved for 2016-2017 (see table IV.3). **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals under post resources.**

Post allocation following the strengthening of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

IV.39 The substantive responsibility for subprogramme 1 is vested in the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (ibid., para. 11.23). The Office consists of two branches: the Policy Analysis and Monitoring Branch and the Coordination, Advocacy and Programme Development Branch.

IV.40 Concerning the allocation of post resources between the two branches, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (A/68/506), the role of the Office and its staffing were examined in the light of the new challenges and opportunities that had emerged at the global and regional levels during the 10 years since the establishment of the Office in 2003, including the anticipated mandate expansion in line with implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the establishment of the United Nations monitoring mechanism to review commitments made towards Africa's development (see also paras. IV.44 and IV.45 below). Of the nine new posts approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/247 A, six were allocated to the Policy Analysis and Monitoring Branch (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 P-2) and three were allocated to the Coordination, Advocacy and Programme Development Branch (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3). Consequently, the two branches currently have a total of 13 and 11 Professional and higher posts, respectively. Upon enquiry, the Committee was further informed that the nine posts had already been filled. **The Advisory Committee notes the efforts made by the Office to fill vacant posts in a timely manner.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

IV.41 The proposed non-post resources of $2,896,400 for the biennium 2018-2019 reflect a decrease of $153,800, or 5 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

Consultants

IV.42 The resources proposed under consultants amount to $365,700 for the biennium 2018-2019 for section 11, representing a decrease of $34,600, or 8.6 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. The Advisory Committee notes from the supplementary information provided to it that the

proposed provision for consultants for 2018-2019 represents 36.5 per cent of the expenditure of $1,002,200 for the biennium 2014-2015.

IV.43 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in line with the strengthening of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (see paras. IV. 39 and IV.40 above), the Office had been progressively increasing its reliance on in-house expertise and significantly decreasing its reliance on consultancies, and that it was further anticipated that the consequent level of savings would grow steadily over time as the newly recruited staff of the Office gained more experience in their work areas. **The Advisory Committee notes the efforts made by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa to utilize in-house expertise and reduce dependency on consultants.**

General comments and recommendations

United Nations monitoring mechanism

IV.44 With respect to the United Nations monitoring mechanism (see A/72/6 (Sect. 11), para. 11.9), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that as mandated in resolution 66/293, the monitoring mechanism reviewed the implementation of all commitments made towards Africa's development by African countries and their development partners, and that, since the inception of the monitoring mechanism in 2012, the Secretary-General had issued two biennial reports on the review of the implementation of commitments made towards Africa's development: one in 2014 and one in 2016. The Office is currently working on the third report, to be presented to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

IV.45 Furthermore, the Advisory Committee was informed that the goals, targets and pledges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 represented important commitments to be covered by the monitoring mechanism. In view of the significant synergies between the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, the findings of the monitoring mechanism would feed directly into the global monitoring and evaluation process conducted by the high-level political forum on sustainable development and could also provide an important contribution to the monitoring processes being developed by the African Union for Agenda 2063. In this context, during the seventeenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa in April 2016, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency began discussions on how to utilize the monitoring mechanism as part of a broader joint framework for African countries to report progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 using a single reporting platform.

Publications

IV.46 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that publications issued by the Department of Public Information, including the *Africa Renewal* magazine, were published in English and French, which were the most widely spoken languages in Africa. In the past, a small number of articles had been translated into Portuguese and Kiswahili when they covered the regions where the languages were commonly used. Furthermore, there were plans to expand translations of some articles into Arabic, in addition to Portuguese and Kiswahili, to reflect regional needs. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts made to translate the publications into other languages and encourages the offices concerned to mobilize additional extrabudgetary resources to cover the costs of translation and expand the reach of the publications.**

Section 12
Trade and development

Revised appropriation for 2016-2017	$138,422,200
Proposal for 2018-2019 submitted by the Secretary-General	$138,059,100
Projected extrabudgetary resources	$80,410,700

Note: Figures in the present report, unless otherwise noted, are at revised 2016-2017 rates (i.e., before recosting).

IV.47 The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for section 12 for the biennium 2018-2019 amount to $138,059,100 before recosting, reflecting a net decrease of $363,100, or 0.3 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 12), table 12.3).

IV.48 The Secretary-General attributes the net decrease of $363,100 to the following three factors (ibid., paras. 12.18-12.20):

(a) Technical adjustments: a net increase of $1,475,300, reflecting an increase of $1,582,500 relating to the full biennial provision of seven new posts (2 P-5, 3 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2) established in 2016-2017 pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 70/247 and 71/272 (see also para. IV.57 below), offset in part by the removal of non-recurrent requirements totalling $107,200 relating to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

(b) Changes within and/or across section(s): a net decrease of $140,300, reflecting the delayed impact on resources of the proposed establishment of a new P-3 post under subprogramme 5, to be funded through the abolishment of a P-3 post under programme support (see paras. IV.53-IV.55 below). In addition, resource changes reflect the redeployment of resources among the executive direction and management, programme of work and programme support components in order to better position the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the delivery of mandates, including those contained in the Nairobi Maafikiano adopted at the fourteenth session of UNCTAD in July 2016;

(c) Other changes: a reduction of $1,698,100, made possible through efficiencies that UNCTAD plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019 as a result of the efforts of the Conference to apply the anticipated Umoja efficiencies presented in the eighth progress report of the Secretary-General on the enterprise resource planning project (A/71/390) to individual day-to-day operations. This translates into post reductions of $1,528,100 and non-post reductions of $170,000. During its consideration of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee requested, but was not provided with, a consolidated list of the reductions categorized under other resource changes across all budget sections, along with an explanation of how they were to be achieved and the extent to which they could be considered efficiencies. Related observations and recommendations of the Committee on this matter are made in chapter I above.

IV.49 Table IV.4 summarizes the regular budget posts approved for the biennium 2016-2017 and the Secretary-General's proposals for 2018-2019. The table also shows extrabudgetary posts projected for 2018-2019.

Table IV.4
Staffing resources

	Number	*Level*
Approved for 2016-2017	390	1 USG, 1 ASG, 5 D-2, 20 D-1, 50 P-5, 65 P-4, 74 P-3, 33 P-2/1, 10 GS (PL) and 131 GS (OL)
Proposed for 2018-2019	384	1 USG, 1 ASG, 5 D-2, 20 D-1, 50 P-5, 65 P-4, 74 P-3, 32 P-2/1, 10 GS (PL) and 126 GS (OL)
New post	1	1 P-3 under subprogramme 5
Redeployments	–	1 P-5 and 1 P-3 from programme support to executive direction and management
		1 P-4 from executive direction and management to programme support
Abolishments	(7)	1 P-3 under programme support
		1 P-2 under subprogramme 1
		1 GS (OL) under executive direction and management
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 2
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 3
		1 GS (OL) under subprogramme 4
		1 GS (OL) under programme support
Extrabudgetary		
Projected for 2018-2019	15	1 D-1, 1 P-5, 4 P-4/3 and 9 GS (OL)

Comments and recommendations on posts

IV.50 As reflected in table IV.4, the Secretary-General proposes a total of 384 posts for the biennium 2018-2019, a net reduction of 6 posts compared with the total number of posts approved for 2016-2017, comprising the proposed abolishment of seven posts (1 P-3, 1 P-2 and 5 General Service (Other level)), the establishment of one post (1 P-3) and the redeployment of three posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3).

Abolishments

IV.51 The Secretary-General indicates that of the seven posts proposed for abolishment, six posts (1 P-2 and 5 General Service (Other level)) would be abolished as the result of efficiencies that the Conference plans to bring about in the biennium 2018-2019 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 12), paras. 12.50, 12.57, 12.64, 12.71, 12.78 and 12.93 (a) (iii)).

IV.52 One of the six posts proposed for abolishment as the result of efficiencies, the post of Associate Economic Affairs Officer (P-2), is under subprogramme 1, Globalization, interdependence and development (ibid., para. 12.57). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the functions of the P-2 post were not the same as those of the new temporary posts approved by the General Assembly in resolution 71/272 A (see para. IV.57 below). The Committee was also informed that the P-2 post was currently vacant. The Committee makes comments on the potential impact of the proposed abolishment of entry-level posts in chapter I above.

IV.53 The Secretary-General indicates that the abolishment of the P-3 post of Information Systems Officer under programme support is proposed in order to finance the establishment of one P-3 post of Economic Affairs Officer under subprogramme 5, Africa, least developed countries and special programmes (ibid., para. 12.93 (a) (ii)). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in order to address the increased needs for policy advice at the national and regional levels in Africa (see paras. IV.54 and IV.55 below), and taking into account General Assembly resolution 71/274 on the budget outline for 2018-2019, it was proposed to

finance the new post requirement through efficiencies identified within section 12. The Committee was also informed that the proposed abolishment of the P-3 post of Information Systems Officer was due to anticipated reduced needs for the development of local business applications that were now provided under Umoja. The Committee was informed that the P-3 post was currently vacant. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes that any resources released through the abolishment of posts that are no longer needed should not be viewed as available resources for repurposing to other uses.** The Committee discusses post-related issues in chapter I above.

New post

IV.54 The Secretary-General proposes the establishment of one P-3 post of Economic Affairs Officer under subprogramme 5 to provide support to the UNCTAD Regional Office for Africa and to support increased demand for tailored advisory services, substantive support and direct onsite support for the work of UNCTAD in the region (see A/72/6 (Sect. 12), para. 12.85). The Secretary-General indicates that the increase is offset by the proposed abolishment of one post of Information Systems Officer (P-3) under the programme support component (see para. IV.53 above). **The Advisory Committee considers that the establishment of any post must be justified on its own merits, taking into account the programmatic and/or workload requirements that are needed for the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities.** The Committee discusses post-related issues in chapter I above.

IV.55 Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed establishment of the P-3 post responded to new demands for policy advice at the national and regional levels in Africa in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, particularly on the ongoing negotiations of a continental free trade area. In exploring ways to respond to this new work, the Secretariat considered the option of increasing travel of staff to the region versus establishing a Professional post in Addis Ababa, and the latter was considered to be the more economical and effective option.

Redeployments

IV.56 The Secretary-General indicates that resource changes reflect the redeployment of resources in order to better position UNCTAD in the delivery of mandates, including the following (ibid., paras. 12.19, 12.50 and 12.93 (a) (iv)):

(a) Strengthening the Communications, Information and Outreach Section under executive direction and management through the proposed redeployment of two posts (1 Senior Public Information Officer (P-5) and 1 Economic Affairs Officer (P-3)) from the programme support component in order to satisfy increased work demand in that area;

(b) Enhancing support to the Trade and Development Board and two new intergovernmental groups of experts established in line with the Nairobi Maafikiano through the proposed redeployment of one post of Public Information Officer (P-4) to the programme support component from executive direction and management.

Overall staffing

IV.57 As indicated in paragraph IV.48 (a) above, seven posts were recently approved by the General Assembly (3 established and 4 temporary posts). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the additional seven posts were directly linked to specific outputs: for the three established posts, support to Member States on trade and development-related statistical monitoring; and for the

four temporary posts, strengthening the role of UNCTAD as a main stakeholder in the financing for development process, in line with paragraph 88 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

IV.58 The Advisory Committee also requested an update on the recent post changes approved for section 12 under the regular budget, which is shown in table IV.5 (see also A/70/7, table IV.6).

Table IV.5
Regular budget post changes under section 12

Biennium	*Established posts*	*Temporary posts*
2010-2011	400	–
2012-2013	400	–
2014-2015	385	–
2016-2017[a]	386	4
2018-2019	380	4

[a] Three posts were established under General Assembly resolution 70/247 (para. 75) and four temporary posts were approved under resolution 71/272 A (sect. XII).

Vacant posts

IV.59 The Advisory Committee notes from the supplementary information provided to it that four of the vacant posts are at the P-2 level. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the UNCTAD secretariat had not experienced any issues relating to retaining or attracting staff under the Young Professionals Programme (contrary to the experiences of some other offices; see chap. I above). Of the four P-2 vacancies, one incumbent was on a temporary assignment and three posts had been recently vacated through the promotion of the incumbents. Of those three, one had been filled and one was earmarked for abolishment.

IV.60 **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for post resources.**

Comments and recommendations on non-post resources

IV.61 The proposed non-post resources of $12,514,400 for the biennium 2018-2019 reflect a decrease of $277,200, or 2 per cent, compared with the revised appropriation for 2016-2017. The reductions are reflected under all budget classes. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for non-post resources.**

General comments and observations

IV.62 With respect to evaluation activities planned for 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that UNCTAD was guided by the Trade and Development Board, which decides on an evaluation plan for a period ranging between five and seven years. The current plan includes an evaluation of subprogramme 5 in 2018, while the plan for 2019 and onward will be discussed and agreed upon at the seventy-fifth session of the Board, which is scheduled for September 2017.